AN INDIAN IN WESTERN EUROPE

231

VOLUME II

BY

PANCHAPAKESA AYYAR, M.A. (Oxon.), I.C.S.

Author of :
"An Indian in Western Europe," Vol. I
"...n After-Dinner Stories," Vols. I & II
"...e Clutch of The Devil"
"...e in Sex and other stories of Indian Women"
"...ditya : A Historical Romance of Ancient India"
etc., etc.

R. C. S. MANIAM
SESHADRIPURAM, BANGALORE
1930

THE BANGALORE PRESS
MYSORE ROAD
BANGALORE CITY

CONTENTS

		PAGE
[CHA]PTER IX.	IN THE LAND OF EQUALITY ..	203
,, X.	THE I.C.S. EXAMINATION AND AFTER	258
[,,] XI.	IN BELGIUM AND GERMANY ..	293
[,,] XII.	HOME AGAIN	316
[,,] XIII.	THE ENGLISH FAMILY AND THE INDIAN	328
,, XIV.	THE SECRETS OF ENGLAND'S GREATNESS	358
[,,] [X]V.	WHAT INDIA SHOULD LEARN FROM THE WEST AND WHAT IT SHOULD TEACH IT ..	376

All rights reserved in all Countries.
Copyright registered.

An Indian in Western Europe.

VOLUME II.

CHAPTER IX.

In the Land of Equality.

TANJORE.

EVER since the momentary vision of France I had on my way to England, I had entertained ardent desire to make a fuller acquaintance with it country which had appealed to me so strongly ice my early student days. France, the land of oltaire and Rousseau, of Montaigne and Diderot, Napoleon and Jeanne D'Arc, of Danton and obespierre, of Anatole, Bergson and Romain olland, the land which gave birth to the French evolution and the strangely attractive but pathe- ally futile phrase—"Liberty, Equality, aternity" as an ideal to be reached by humanity pealed to me as no other foreign country had. vo minor reasons urged me to make a pretty ig stay in France. One was the necessity of proving my French. I had to offer French erman for the History Honours School at ford, and had chosen French as the more useful guage. Even while at 21, Cromwell Road, is Beck and Mr. Knaster had urged me to idy French. There was a competent tutor who

was an Englishman and used to charge fiv shillings per lesson if the tuition was given i his house at Hampstead or half a guinea if h were to come to 21, Cromwell Road, as I desire This increased charge was made as nearly tw hours would be wasted in going to and fro, and s as the tutor took care to explain to me, I wa getting 150% value for my money since I wa getting fifteen shillings ten pence value for m ten shillings six pence. The thing, of cours was unimpeachable on mathematical grounds five into three gives fifteen, and ten pence w the railway fare to and fro, and 190 pence ar slightly more than 150% of 126 pence. If an thing, the gentleman had under-estimated m advantage. His only error was a pardonable on and one common to all financiers who dabble currency notes, and lay in assuming that the fa value, of five shillings per lesson in this cas represented 100% value. Three lessons at te shillings six pence apiece made me change m mind and I told my tutor that I would go ove to his house for the lessons and pay five shilling This I did at the risk of being regarded as foolish customer who was wilfully foregoing h 51% unearned profit. The tutor agreed, but ga me 9 P.M. as my time. Perhaps a foolish custom deserved no more consideration. I used to g and return by the underground trains. For s

days I went to Hampstead and then abruptly stopped after giving notice. The reason was curious. On my way to the underground station at Hampstead I had to pass a certain street. There, one day, I saw a man and woman, obviously lovers, in a compromising position on the pavement. As I passed them, the man swore at me in a threatening manner and the girl giggled. I resolved never more to go out at nights and see such sights. Never afterwards did I take any tuition in French. At Oxford, though one cheap tutor, Dr. Sapote, a Pole who charged only half a crown per lesson, existed, I didn't engage him but studied French for myself and made much more rapid progress than in my 150% or 100% value tuition days. Perhaps this was because the obsession that I was paying too much didn't exist, or perhaps it was because instead of 50% profit I was getting infinite profit as I was paying nothing for what I learnt. In this way I passed the 'French unseen' in the History Previous. But my pronunciation left much to be desired, and nothing gives the correct pronunciation so quickly as talking the language with people whose mother-tongue it is. Hence, a powerful additional motive to visit France. A third motive was, as I have already stated, to have a look at the battlefields of France and Belgium.

In July 1920 I had mastered enough French to get on with in France. On the advice of Miss

Beck I resolved to write to some respectable boarding house in Paris so that I might see France at her normal level and not hectic France as is seen in the gay Paris hotels. These boarding houses require from applicants for rooms references as to character, status in life, etc. I had no difficulty in booking a room at Madame Villard's in Rue Kepler, Paris XVI, one of the best parts of that city.

Having gone through all the vexatious preliminaries incidental to taking out a Foreign Office endorsement for visiting France, Belgium and Switzerland and the Visas of the Consuls of those countries, I set out from London and reached Paris at about 7-30 A.M. after a stormy crossing of the Channel but without any incident worth noting. I took a taxi and reached 9, Rue Kepler at about 8 P.M. I rang the bell. A young woman came. "I am the gentleman who wired" said I in French. Madame Villard, a genial old lady, aged about 60, came to receive me. She poured out a whole torrent of French. I was bewildered and could make nothing of it. I spoke in English. They didn't understand me well though Mlle Lambertin, the assistant of Madame Villard, could make out the gist of what I said. "You no mention to-day," said she to me. I pleaded guilty, for my telegram was simply to reserve a room. "Is my room ready?" I asked. "Oui" (yes) said Madame Villard, and I went up to the second storey with

Mlle Lambertin who showed me the room which was quite a decent bed-sitter. I told Madame Villard in bad French, "I do not eat meat or fish or anything which contains those ingredients". "Do you eat eggs?" asked she. "Yes" said I. "Do you like fruits?" asked Madame Villard. "Oh, immensely" said I. "Any other thing you would like to mention?" asked she. "Yes" said I. "Please see that whatever frying is done for me is done in butter and that no lard is used." "It will be costly" said she. "I shall pay" I replied. "All right, then" said she.

I went down to dinner an hour afterwards. All the rest had eaten theirs. I sat alone and ate my dinner which consisted of an egg omelette, boiled potatoes and cauliflower and fresh ripe grapes in silence. Madame Villard took down my address in England. After dinner she showed me how to lock the door and formally handed to me a key of the door leading into the street. "Monsieur," said she, "if you come before 10 P.M., we shall open the door when you ring. If you come later than that, I expect you not to ring but to open the door noiselessly and creep to your room. If you lose the key, ten francs are charged for supplying a new key. Again, I generally expect boarders to return home before midnight." I rushed upstairs to my room in the second storey. There was not enough light to guide me. There were

two rooms close to each other and I opened the wrong room. A Swede was sitting there. He smiled and said in perfect English that my room was the next. I apologized and withdrew.

Tired to death, I slept peacefully till 7-30 A.M. when the maid woke me up and said "Vôtre bain est prêt" (your bath is ready). I said "Merci" (Thanks) and went to bathe. A good bath is the best restorer of the vital energies, and I came back considerably refreshed. On my return I found my breakfast waiting for me. But, what a breakfast! Two rolls of bread, a little butter and a cup of coffee. I no longer wondered why the French had been beaten by the English at Crecy, Poitiers and Agincourt.

My friends Bahl and Chagla called on me at 10 A.M. and I went out with them. We proceeded to the Arc De Triomphe of the great Napoleon. Twelve beautiful avenues radiate from the triumphal arch at equal angles, and so the place where they join has been appropriately named Etoile (the star) since conventionally stars are shown like asterisks. The twelve avenues are Avenue De La Grande Armée, Avenue du bois de Boulogne, Avenue Victor Hugo, Avenue Klèber Avenue D'Jena, Avenue Marceau, Avenue Des Champs Elysées, Avenue Friedland, Avenue Hoche, Avenue De Wagram, Avenue Mac Mahon and Avenue Carnot. It will be seen that many of them have

the names of the battles and marshals of Napoleon and a few of revolutionary generals like Carnot, poets like Victor Hugo and presidents of the Republic like Mac Mahon. We ascended the tower with the permission of the care-taker and had a magnificent view. Paris, beautiful Paris with its many graceful buildings and churches, broad roads, shaded avenues, superb gardens and gay men and women, lay before us in all its grandeur, conscious of its own beauty. The master mind of Napoleon showed itself even in this little arch in its central position. How many little things are done by great men which if done by little men would immortalize them for ever! The care-taker expected from us Napoleonic tips and was, needless to say, disappointed.

From the Arc De Triomphe we proceeded to the Eiffel Tower and after paying two francs each were taken to the top, though not to the very top as that is impossible, and had a fine panorama of Paris, much more extensive than that from the Arc De Triomphe but correspondingly less distinct. Eiffel Tower is the highest of all towers in the world unless it has been exceeded by some recent American sky-scraper, and the view from the top was exactly like the bird's-eye view I had from an aeroplane. The Champ De Mars, so famous in the revolutionary days, and the Trocadero lie at the foot of Eiffel Tower, and the Grande Roue (the

great wheel), a gigantic wheel formerly used as a merry-go-round, is also close by though abandoned. After taking some light refreshments we climbed down in the lift and went our several ways, Bahl and Chagla to their hotel in the Rue De Provence and I to my pension (boarding house). It was 2-15 when I reached my place. Their lunch time was 12-30. I had been told so even on the previous day, but, alas, human memory is frail, especially so in the excitement of seeing Eiffel Towers and triumphal arches. I have never been an advocate of vicarious punishment, and it seemed to me monstrous that, holding such opinions as I did, my stomach should be made to suffer for the fault of my memory. "Mademoiselle," said I to Mlle Lambertin, "I am very tired. Be a good girl and fetch me my lunch." "As a special case, I shall" replied she and brought the lunch to my room. Thereafter, if I ever was late for any meal I used to go to some restaurant rather than trouble Madame Villard and her establishment.

In the afternoon I went round the Boulevards of Paris. For sheer beauty Paris is unbeatable and so has been rightly named the Queen of Cities. Frenchmen make all things beautiful, Englishmen make all things big and durable. Even the very vases on the mantel show this, French vases being frail dreamy little things of beauty easily breakable whereas English vases are strong four-square things

strongly reminiscent of the earth of which they are made. Modern Paris is largely the work of Napoleon III. He laid out the fine Boulevards not with the primary object of providing delightful promenades but to make barricades and street fighting, so common before and so troublesome to the rulers, more difficult. Boulevard St. Germain, Boulevard Du Montparnasse, Boulevard D'Italie, Boulevard St. Denis and Boulevard Richard Le Noir are some typical Boulevards. Boulevard St. Denis with its lofty St. Denis gate specially appealed to me. Rues or streets take off from these Boulevards and are innumerable. Where boulevards meet or where several rues meet we get a 'Place'. Place De L'Opera, Place D'Italie, Place De La Bastille are representative places. Representative Faubourgs (suburbs) are Faubourg St. Jacques and Faubourg St. Germain. 'Boulevards' originally meant battlements but now mean only broad walks lined on both sides by trees. Many of these walks have been constructed at the localities where the old battlements existed.

Paris has many superb parks and gardens. Jardin (garden) du Luxembourg, Jardin des Tuileries, Jardin du Palais Royal, Jardin d'Acclimatation (better known as the Bois de Boulogne), Parc des Buttes-Chaumont, Parc Monceau, and Parc de Montsouris are the principal ones. The beauty of these gardens is indescribable and certainly

constitutes one of the main attractions of Paris. Every afternoon, and often in mornings too, gay crowds of men and women gather. In most gardens a band is in attendance and coffee and sweets can be had. The Luxembourg garden is the best as a garden, but the Bois de Boulogne is the most impressive. As the names show clearly, many of these were the pleasure gardens of Kings and were made available for the people only by the Revolutions and the Republic.

I returned to my pension in time for dinner. At dinner I was introduced to all the other boarders, a regular league of nations comprising Peruvians, Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Britons and Americans from the states. Driven from the chancellories and cabinets of Europe, scoffed at by the politicians of the world, the poor League of Nations appeared to me to have found a secure asylum in the dining room of Madame Villard. I expressed this to an English lady who was on the staff of the Reparations commission and she remarked laughingly " And India has got her own national as her direct representative here unlike in the real League of Nations," a remark which was quite just. A Norwegian lady to my right whispered to me in good English, "Don't you think we are awfully packed here? There seems to be scarcely space enough for us to move about." I said that even that was not

without its advantages. "How so?" she demanded. "Because we cannot fall down and hurt ourselves as there is no space to fall in," I replied. She laughed and repeated the conversation to a Norwegian gentleman to her right and he to his neighbour till Mlle Lambertin heard about it but charitably refrained from repeating it to Madame Villard who would certainly not have relished it. At dinner one of the English ladies talked about the reforms India had got, adding "Self-Government may not succeed very well in India as the people over there have not got that respect for law and order which they ought to have." "They ought to learn the respect for law from us Americans," said a young American lady opposite to me. "They will take centuries before they do that" added she. I didn't quite like this. So, I said, "Pardon me, Madam, if I appear to be impolite. But if Americans have that much respect for law as you say, how is it that you drink wine over here when your country has gone dry?" There was a general titter all round, and the fair American coloured and said "I meant no offence". "Nor I either" said I. There the matter ended for the time being. From the next day onwards she and her mother used to take water instead of wine. So, Americans, if they were typical representatives, were proved to have neither that respect for law nor that independence for which they are famed.

One thing however pleased me. Both the Americans were entirely free from prejudice towards me and did not show any resentment at my retort and always behaved towards me most courteously.

After dinner I went out in the underground to the Bastille where I saw great crowds and all kinds of entertainments, for the Fête Nationale (National Festival), the anniversary of the capture of the Bastille, was to come off on July 14th. The successful termination of the war had lent a new enthusiasm to the celebrations. Hundreds of people were singing the famous Marseillaise, the national song of France. Professional songstresses sang the song splendidly and were listened to with rapt attention by crowds whose members gave one franc and half franc notes. The Marseillaise, as sung by these, moved me profoundly. The girls seemed to forget themselves in their enthusiasm. The women of France are, in general, handsome by Nature, and consummate Art has embellished Nature's charms. Street dancing was found here and there even on the 11th night, though the acme was on the 14th.

The whole of the 12th I spent in seeing the principal churches of Paris. The best are Notre Dame De Paris, La Madeleine and Sacré-coeur of Montmartre. They are all of different types of architecture. Notre Dame is the most impressive, La Madeleine the most graceful, and Sacré-coeur the most romantic. I spent a long time looking at

each of these three. At Montmartre there is a funicular railway which carries passengers up the hill for a small fee. I had an excellent tea at Montmartre with plenty of nice cakes. Only, for drink I took coffee instead of tea. France has the best coffee and the worst tea in the world. The funniest thing about the French as regards drinking coffee is that a lot of them drink it without milk and that a stranger must say "coffee with milk" if he wants milk in the coffee. When going round to see the churches, I saw also the Bank of France, the Exchange, the Hotel de Ville (Town Hall), the Palais de Justice (High Court), the Chamber of Commerce and the Palais de l' Elysée. The last is the residence of the President of the Republic and is closed to sight-seers. But I had a good look at the exterior. It is a fit residence for the President of a Republic. The Hotel De Ville is a magnificent building with considerable architectural merit and appealed to me more than the more costly new Town Hall of London. The Exchange too is an impressive building though without any special merit. This day I saw also the panorama of the eight bridges. The bridges of Paris are beautiful in addition to being durable. The bridge of Jena and the bridge of Alexander III deserve special mention. It was about 11 P.M. when I emerged out of the underground station, George V, and wanted to go to my boarding house. Losing my way,

accosted a Frenchman and asked him where Rue Kepler was. He was evidently absorbed in thought, for his reply, "Yes, I am a Frenchman" had no relevancy to my question. After vacantly staring at me for a minute it probably occurred to him that I might, after all, be wanting something and so he asked "What is it you want, sir?" in French. I replied that I wanted to go to my room in 9, Rue Kepler. Thereupon he took my arm and led me to Rue Kepler talking a lot in rapid colloquial French on the way, of all which I could gather only a word here and there. My philosopher friend shook hands with me vigorously and said in slow impressive tones "No, the Third Republic which survived the war will survive any catastrophe. Long live the Republic." I said 'Amen' at which he again shook hands with me and declared that I was of the proper stuff. Then he abruptly left me and walked away. A moment later, I trembled at suddenly discovering that I had forgotten my street key. To ring up Madame Villard would be to irritate that good lady. But that, I resolved, would be my last resort, for it was obviously out of the question to spend the night in the street or to go to a hotel. On going to the door of the boarding house I found it locked and an English girl standing opposite to it engaged in deep converse with an army officer. My first sensation was suspicion. There were groups of

two all over the streets and I thought that these two also might be one such. I stood hesitating in the street. "You want to open the door?" asked the girl moving away from it. "Unfortunately, I have forgotten my key" said I. "What a silly boy!" said she, and, opening the door with her key said "Enter, and mind the steps". I thanked her profusely and asked "Shall I shut the door?" "No, keep it open for me if you please," said she. I, therefore, left it open, hurried upstairs, literally rolled into my bed, thoroughly exhausted, and in two minutes was plunged in sleep.

The next two days were completely taken up in seeing the Louvre. Of this peerless museum which contains the Venus of Milo, the Mona Lisa of Leonardo, the Madonna of Botticelli, the Christ bearing the Cross by Veronese, the Entombment of Titian, the old man and his grandson by Ghirlandajo, the sculptures of Angelo and the immortal frescoes of Holbein, Gerard Dou and Hals, so much has been written by experts that any praise of mine would be as useless as an addition of a drop of water to the ocean or a candle's light to the sun. Suffice to say, that at the sight of so much beauty I was so moved that I wept tears of joy that I had been privileged to see all this and of sorrow that no such museum existed in India though abundant material existed.

On returning from the Louvre on the 14th evening I wrote for permission to visit the Hotel de la Monnaie and the catacombs. Then in the night I went to see the National Festival celebrations at the Bastille. Such tremendous enthusiasm I had never seen in my life. Men and women utter strangers to one another, danced in the street in a mad frenzy singing the Marseillaise. There were tremendous crowds. From the Place de la Bastille I went to the Place de la Concord, the scene of so much bloodshed in the days of the great Revolution, and saw equally frantic scenes there. Outside every café there was street dancing; I returned to my room at about midnight after seeing Paris in her most emotional mood.

The next day I visited the principal cemeteries of Paris, the Pere-Lachaise, Montparnesse and Montmartre. There is nothing noteworthy about them except that old women sell wreaths near them so that mourners may buy some and put these flowery tokens of their grief with pious hands over the graves of their beloved.

On the 16th a parcel containing a new suit arrived for me from London. This suit was ordered by me in time to be ready before I started for France, but owing to the sudden death of one of the near relatives of the tailor to whom the firm entrusted this work, it could not be delivered to me in time. The firm promised to send it on to France

to my address. What was my horror when I discovered that though I had been assured that personal effects were not liable to customs duty I had been charged no less than 14 francs as customs duty besides being mulcted of 5 francs 30 centimes for other alleged expenses. To make the whole thing perfectly ludicrous, the sum had been rounded off to 20 francs by adding 70 centimes "pourboire" (tip!). I wculd certainly have refused to pay the pourboire but as Madame Villard had paid the twenty francs and taken delivery of the parcel, I perforce had to reimburse her, tips and all. To my astonished query regarding the tip Madame Villard said "Even the customs fellows must have a drink, monsieur." (Pourboire means literally 'to drink'.) "But not at my expense, madam" said I amidst general laughter.

After breakfast I went and spent an hour looking at the column of the Bastille. Though I could not endorse the extreme opinion that the capture of the Bastille was by far the greatest and best event in the history of the world, still I did feel that it was one of the great and good events in the world's history. From the Bastille I went to the school of Fine Arts, the museum of industry, and the Gobelins and was profoundy interested in all that I saw in these three places, and especially the exquisite tapestries exhibited at the Gobelins. I also went to the Institut de France and the Hotel de Legion

d'Honneur and saw all that were to be seen there. It was a brilliant idea of Napoleon to have instituted the Legion d'Honneur with several grades. Bonapartists and anti-Bonapartists, soldiers, statesmen and scientists have all hankered after a legion of honour, and the honour has not been degraded by a too free distribution to unworthy persons.

I had received the card from the Prefecture of Police for visiting the catacombs, which are open to visitors with cards on the first and third Saturdays in a month. I was asked to wait with a candle and matches at Place Denfert-Rochereau and did so. I found nearly a hundred and fifty others waiting likewise. At the precise hour indicated in the cards two policemen came and took us into a subterranean passage after making us light our candles. The door behind us, leading to the brilliant sunlight, was closed, and we were marched along long lanes lined with an unending series of human skeletons. Three hundred thousand human skeletons lighted up by a hundred and fifty dim candles must affect anyone. It did me at any rate. Not with fear but with just that kind of serious pensiveness which we feel when we are near a deathbed or a deserted battlefield or a ruined building. The cold damp dead odour of the place with its myriads of grinning skulls was in vivid contrast to the warm-blooded perspiring human beings cautiously moving about with assumed reverence and real fear,

holding candles which were trembling in their unsteady hands, but led on by an insatiable curiosity to peep into every corner of this chamber of the dead and thus perchance penetrate into the mysteries beyond the grave. A group of English ladies were following me close, and one of them asked me "Don't you feel afraid?" "Afraid! Why? Dead men do no harm" said I. "Still, to think that we are only a yard removed from the dead, isn't it dreadful?" continued she, and her fair young features depicted the horror of her soul. "Madam," said I, "the wise man knows that life is only divided by a yard from death, not only inside the catacombs but also in the wider catacombs called the world." She added in slow accents, "I suppose you are right. But, excuse me for being rude, would you like even after death to be stacked like a piece of firewood here?" Her mother said, "Elsie, what questions you ask!" in a tone of reprobation. "Never mind, madam," said I, "it is a perfectly natural and harmless question. Well, Miss," I said turning to her daughter, "I don't suppose I should like it. Fortunately, there is no danger of such a dreadful catastrophe overtaking me. As soon as I die, my body will be burnt to ashes by reverent hands if, as I hope, I die in the land of my birth, and the bones will be thrown into some sacred river which will transport them to the boundless seas." "How horrid!" said Elsie's mother.

"Not so horrid as this" said Elsie. "See how ugly these skeletons look!" Then I understood why Elsie preferred burning to exhibition of her skeleton. Even her handsome features would look ugly as a skeleton but there would be no such danger if fire consumed a beautiful body and reduced it to nothing. "Can you think of any use of piling up these skeletons like this?" asked Elsie. "Well, yes," I replied, "if a man comes here every day, he will lose all fear of death." "You seem to have no fear even at the very outset" said she. "Oh, that is because, you know, there is no real danger of death here" said I, and all laughed. The ice having been broken, we lost the mock respect and foolish awe and freely commented on the peculiarities of particular skeletons. Even Elsie's mother became eloquent. "What a perfectly horrid man this must have been" she said pointing to a most deformed skull with all other bones gone. "Or woman" I added. "Don't be silly, it never could have been a woman" said Elsie, and all the five ladies emphatically backed her up. Defeated by six votes to one, I bowed my head low to the tyranny of the majority and looked with real fear to days when women's votes would be six times more numerous than men's. Doubtless, woman-made laws will be as harsh, tyrannical and one-sided as man-made laws, and men suffragettes might have to rise up in revolt and will

in all probability receive less considerate treatment than women suffragettes did.

There were some elucidating inscriptions pinned to many skulls. "It is sometimes better to die than to live", "He who is born must die one day", "Death is the end of all suffering" and "Death is the door leading to everlasting life" were some of the best.

Towards the end of our visit our guides became most communicative and told us how these skeletons had been excavated from several over-crowded churchyards and cemeteries and stacked here under the orders of Napoleon III. Finally, after we had reviewed all the skeletons and inhaled enough air of death to make us proof against death for at least one month we emerged out of the subterranean passages into God's sunlight and felt an immense relief in breathing the pure air so different from the damp stuffy air of death we had breathed so long. Handsome tips were paid to the guides by one and all. Then I said good-bye to the English ladies who insisted on shaking hands with me. "We have had a rare sight, don't you think so?" asked Elsie. "Of course," said I, "and incidentally, that is another use of these catacombs, to give a rare sight to visitors who will thus have something to talk about." All laughed and we parted shouting out "Au Revoir" (till we meet again!), the elegant French equivalent for "good-bye".

I went to Versailles on Monday in a tram from the Louvre. It is a curious thing, in France as elsewhere, that sometimes if you ask two people about a certain place you will be told with the same cocksureness to follow two directly opposite directions. This was my unfortunate experience. Though the Swedish gentleman and Mademoiselle Lambertin had told me that it was from Louvre that I should take the tram I must needs ask a man in the train. He said "Gare de Lyon". If he had gone out before the Louvre underground station was reached, I would have got down at the Louvre, but as he was still in the train I couldn't, consistent with decency, walk out. So I remained. At the Gare de Lyon I asked for the tram to Versailles and was asked to go to the Louvre. "Good Heavens!" said I "I come from that same place." "The more trouble for you, sir" replied the railway official, "This is the station for Marseilles". "Ah" said I "that explains it." "What explains it?" asked the mystified Frenchman. "This similarity in sound between Marseilles and Verseilles" said I and hurried back to the Louvre whence I took the tram to Versailles.

The way was pleasant, the fare light, the comrades agreeable, and in an hour I found myself in Versailles, Versailles the scene of so many famous treaties which have sealed the fates of nations. The chateau was just in front of the tram

terminus, and in I walked without any further ceremony. On the courtyard on both sides were figures of men who had made themselves and France great, Conde, Turenne, Suffrein, L'Hopital to name only a few. The interior of the chateau was all that could be desired. Busts of almost all the worthies from the time of Clovis down to our own days, grand statues of Napoleon and Louis XIV, wonderful pictures of all the battles in which France had a part from the famous battle of Tolobosta where Clovis became a Christian till the battle of 1840 in Algiers, everything of any note in the history of France, was duly found there. Proud Moreau, strangled Pichegru, honest Carnot, able Cambaceres and the marshals of Napoleon, all were there. The men who had guillotined one another were standing side by side. Richelieu with his frank militarism and Mazarin with his Italian cunning, both were there.

In a corner, all by herself, with no companion, as if to show that she has no equal in the History of France, stands Jeanne D'Arc, the Maid of Orleans. Oh, such a face! So full of the innocence and charm of youth, the simple belief of childhood and the supreme confidence which arises out of faith. How could her butchers have mustered up courage to burn her? But there is no knowing how degenerate the best natures become in a mad national hatred. There are plenty of pictures of Napoleon

sold at the Chateau, but none of Jeanne. Even France has apparently only lip homage for the great Saint, and prefers to worship the selfish autocrat who thrust her yoke by brute force on unwilling nations to the pure-hearted virgin who delivered her soil from the heel of the foreigner. The moral is not encouraging to the future peace or liberty of humanity.

I went to the chamber where the Tribune sat in the days of Napoleon, and, with a touch of human weakness, sat in the front row. All the others also, with that sympathetic reaction common to most human beings, did the same.

The gardens of Versailles are wonderful, and the unique fountains, of which there are very many, some being as much as 40 feet high, were all in full play. A gay crowd of men and women was present, wandering from fountain to fountain and hearing an exquisite band near the chateau. I doubt whether anything but Royalty could have created such a thing of beauty as Versailles with its haunting chateau, gardens and fountains, but I am certain that Democracy alone could have made full use of it by throwing it open to one and all. The famous Hall of Mirrors at Versailles is a splendid hall with mirrors on all sides, but I was not particularly struck by anything artistic in the construction of the hall itself. Here many world-important treaties have been signed, and it must have been a

difficult thing for diplomatists to dissimulate their real feelings for a long time, and any exhibition of real feelings even to oneself would have been instantly visible to opposing diplomats through the mirrors. As the guide told us " Sirs, no other place in the world has seen so much self-control and deception." The old diplomacy with its dark methods is, perhaps, dying, though not so fast as its opponents would have us believe, but the new diplomacy with its changed maxims and shibboleths has methods no less dark though outwardly more humane. As an old Frenchman told me *apropos* this " Monsieur, the cockroach has shed its skin, but it is still the cockroach, and will develop another skin very like the old in course of time, and has shed its old skin simply because it has become useless and not owing to any moral reformation."

On my return from Versailles after spending a most delightful day, I wrote a letter to M. Charles Baron, Depute Des Basses Alpes, for a ticket to attend the sessions of the Chamber of Deputies. A ticket from a member is required for attending the sessions of the Senate or the Chamber of Deputies. I knew no member of either house and yet wanted to visit both the houses somehow. I looked up the proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies in "Le Temps' (The Times of Paris) and found that one M. Charles Baron, Depute des Basses Alpes, had been called to order thrice by the president

at a single sitting. "That is the man for me" said I to myself. "These irrepressible enthusiasts are always responsive to generous emotions", and straightway sent the letter. I wrote that I was an Indian student desirous of attending a sessions of the Chamber of Deputies but knew no member personally, though I had read about him, and so would be obliged if he would send me a ticket. In India, of course, such a letter would have had no effect. False pride and an undue sense of one's importance are so common. But, as I expected, the very next day I got not one but two tickets with M. Charles Baron's compliments. Such is the civility in the land of equality. Immensely delighted, I asked an Indian friend to accompany me, and we both went to the Chamber of Deputies on the next convenient day.

This Chamber of Deputies is about the most lively assembly that I have ever seen. Even after the President has taken his chair, which he does somewhat ceremoniously, being ushered in by an usher girt with a sword who cries "M. Le President", the members continue to cluster together in small groups, chatting, laughing and making gestures. The members are most of them elderly men with a large preponderance of bald heads, yet they behave like school boys before the class begins. The president rises and reads something at a terrific speed. The talk and the laughter go on just the

same among the members. The president stamps his feet, raps the cane on the table and rings the bell. Some ushers cry out "Silence, messieurs, s'il vous plait" (Silence sirs, if you please), "Silence, messieurs, je vous prie" (Silence sirs, I pray you") thrice a minute. But the members are generally neither pleased to keep silence nor are thay amenable to prayers. So, this hubbub continues. ,The president sits down finally and calls upon a member to speak. As if to revenge himself, he now speaks to others and pays not the slightest heed to the member. The member thunders on as only Frenchmen can do. Six men from the right cry "Tres bien" (Well said!) and six from the left shout out "Rubbish!" Four or five stand up and try to speak at the same time. They address one another, speak all at a time, and there is a terrible confusion. Such is the liberty in this assembly. Liberty, equality and fraternity are fully present since there is nothing to choose between member and member or member and president. But eloquence is very common, and the members are all attention to an orator who can sweep them off their feet by a fervid appeal to their emotions. Brilliant repartees are frequent. To a superficial observer an Indian Home Rule meeting is very order itself compared with this assembly of the French people. But soon, very soon, the observer will come to know that the confusion in the Chamber

of Deputies arises from the obvious sincerity of conviction of the individual members who all mean business unlike the dreamers who generally abound at Indian Home Rule meetings.

The next day I went with a friend to the Hotel de la Monnaie or mint. After seeing all the up-to-date instruments for finding out the genuineness and correct weight of coins we went into the work-shops and observed the various processes in the minting of coins with evident interest. What struck us forcibly was the entire absence of gold and silver. Copper and bronze and nickel, nothing but these. In this connection I must note that all over Paris I found in that tour silver coins but rarely and gold coins not at all. The usual thing was the one franc and half franc note. An ingenious scientist once calculated that there would be on the average a million and five hundred thousand tiny carriers of disease in each one franc note.

In the night I went with two friends to see the Folies-Bergiere which was running for several weeks and drawing crowded houses and which some people told us was well worth seeing. The scene in which the star of Paris came in a basket and distributed flowers was loudly applauded and was not without its grace. The concluding scene was in keeping with the whole show. Three apparently naked women stood in the background amidst the wholly undeserved but thunderous applause of an

infatuated audience. The show was calculated to undermine morality. Touts also moved stealthily among the audience advertising the unfortunate white slaves who had engaged them. I was thoroughly disgusted with the performance and told Madame Villard that France ought to be ashamed of patronizing such shows. "Monsieur," said that lady, "were there many Frenchmen there?" "No," said I, "most of the spectators were foreigners." "Then why blame Frenchmen?" asked she justly. "The show is run for foreigners and paid for by foreigners."

I wrote to M. Leon Bourgeois, the President of the Senate, for a ticket to attend the sessions of that body. The very next post brought me two tickets with M. Leon Bourgeois' best compliments. Oh, how I wish that we Indians could acquire this absolute spirit of equality prevalent in France! England is pre-eminently the land of liberty, France pre-eminently the land of equality, and the land of fraternity is yet to come. In England, the liberty of the subject is raised on a very high pedestal. It is the country of the habeas corpus. But it has no ideal or practice of equality as France after the Revolutions. In England a Duke or a Marquis is a being apart, the blue blood is something esteemed more highly than the common red blood. France is the land of lettres de cachet and droit administratif, and is, in spite of all its boast, most certainly not a land of liberty in the sense England is. But for

equality, no land can beat France. Her dummy dukes, marquises and barons are regarded as equals of the common fry and indeed address themselves as "M. Le Baron....", "M. Le Duc...." (Mr. Baron so and so, Mr. Duke so and so). Prime ministers and presidents are equals of the people. No doubt, some French statesmen do sometimes speak with assumed contempt of the "Canaille" (mob), but this is only a pose and, so far as it is real, is only a negation of fraternity and not of equality. Of course, there is much liberty and fraternity also in France, but her speciality is equality.

I took an Indian friend, and both of us went and seated ourselves comfortably in the best seats facing the president's chair. M. Leon Bourgeois was also announced ceremoniously and he and M. Poincare came together and both of them looked up at us and nodded smilingly. How flattered we felt and how much at home by this simple human greeting! How impossible it is for strangers of no consequence like us to obtain such civilities from Englishmen or Indians of the same status! The members of the Senate are much older than their brethren in the Chamber, and few are near the minimum fixed by law. Many are 55 and above. Bald heads are appallingly common, and coughs of incessant recurrence. Owing to the comparatively less vitality of the members, the sessions is less

disturbed, but even these old men can kick up a row and behave like school-boys when excited. Perhaps, this irrepressible bubbling of even old Frenchmen is the result of their keeping their enthusiasm unimpaired. Many old men in France and Germany led armies and won battles at an age when those few Indian old men of the same age who manage to live will be hobbling on sticks if not lying in bed. Every Frenchman can make a soldier, as indeed every Englishman and German. The hot blood in them is not cooled by philosophy or frozen by cowardice as in India. It did me good to see some black faces in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. These members were from Senegal, Algeria and Pondicherry all of which have a right to send members. When will India get such a right with regard to the Mother of Parliaments? Till she gets that right Indian debates in the House of Commons are bound to be dull, ill-informed and useless. Indian princes may be allowed to elect some members to the House of Lords; and the Council of State, the Legislative Assembly and the India Government allowed to elect and nominate some members to the House of Commons. Nothing will bring England and India closer than this. The plan need continue only till India becomes as self-governing a dominion as Canada or Australia.

The next day I heard from my landlady to my great surprise that two of my friends had called

at the boarding house at about 11-30 P.M. on the previous night and insisted on ringing the bell despite the worthy lady's remonstrances. Finally, she had made them desist by peeping out of the window in her night dress and telling them that I was out. My concern was not about the inconvenience caused to Madame Villard, but because I feared that it might be Messrs. Bahl and Francis come to cancel our proposed trip to Fontainebleau. With serious misgivings I dressed and, after informing Mlle Lambertin that I wouldn't be in for lunch, went to the hotel of my two friends. I found that they were not the disturbers of the previous night's peace and that they were as eager to go to Fontainebleau as ever. So, we went to Gare De Lyon and took the 10-55 train. After a most pleasant and uneventful run for about an hour and a half we reached the place. With our accustomed alacrity we boarded the first tram we met and flew to the chateau. Getting down at a neat café-restaurant we alighted and prepared to take our lunch acting on my principle "A man without food is like a ship without ballast". The lunch was really good, and the price was only seven francs including the half price of wine charged for water. It is an almost universal practice in French restaurants to charge half the price of a glass of common red wine for water. Once, when I indignantly asked a manager why he had charged me for water

he replied "Monsieur, that is the custom in Paris. We get 50% profits out of wine. Simply because you drink water and insult our national beverage, are we to lose this profit even? After all, the trouble in giving water and wine is just the same."

After an enviable repast we started for the chateau which was close by and waited for the guide. For every chateau, museum and sight-seeing place in France there are official guides who explain everything. In addition, almost every day, Cook's guides may also be found firing away in English to their English party of tourists. To those who cannot understand French, Cook's guides are a boon. As soon as the guide came, we went round the palace. We saw the splendid rooms of Francis I, Napoleon, Louis XIV and Madame De Maintenon, the courtyard where the great Napoleon had bidden his historic farewell to his old guard, the famous King's Fine, the magnificent wood, the wonderful gardens and the gigantic carps in the pond. We didn't even omit a ludicrous Chinese museum. After seeing everything, we returned to the station and I had a nap in the return train. At the Gare De Lyon all three of us got down and parted company in high spirits after having enjoyed the fine outing and got the best worth of the twenty-five francs which each of us had spent.

On the 24th of July I had to go to the Prefecture of Police to get my Carte D'Identite (identity

card) which any foreign sojourner was bound to take out within fifteen days after arrival in France. Three small photographs were required. I stepped into a photographer's which had advertised on a board that photos would be taken for the Carte D'Identite and three copies delivered within thirty minutes for five francs. A young lady was the photographer. Two gentlemen and a lady were waiting in the room reading some of the numerous newspapers strewn on the table. "This way, monsieur" said the girl and took me to a side room where her old father arranged all the preliminaries in a minute. "Now, monsieur, don't look so grave lest the gentlemen of the Police should credit you with sinister intentions against the liberty of France or the safety of the republic. Do put on a smile" said the lady, and I smiled at her remarks. "Clic-clac" went the camera, and two photos had been taken. "Thank you monsieur, you looked so charming" said the girl and directed me to the hall. "Be looking at some of these silly newspapers while I get the copies ready" said she. I learnt from the three persons already there that the fair photographer had used the same words to each one of them. "Perhaps, they are her patent phrases" said I. "And rather more effective than most patent medicines" said one of the gentlemen. "Oh, how we do feel flattered when she says that we look so charming though we know that it is all

nonsense." "Well, do we know that?" asked the lady somewhat indignantly. "Er—I forgot—about you. You indeed are charming" added the poor gentleman at seeing his wife's ire. Most Englishmen will utter any lie to please a lady and this was one of the worst.

Soon my comrades got their photos. The two gentlemen were well pleased with theirs while the lady declared "What a hideous thing she has made me look!" Her husband pacified her saying "What else can you expect, dearest, from these take and give photos? There is hardly time to touch up." I got my copies in a few minutes more. The photos were quite good and, indeed, the copy in my Carte D' Identite is as clear and fresh to-day as when it was taken seven years ago. I took the copies and paid the photographer. "Monsieur," she said, "how unreasonable these English women sometimes are. I tried to make the face of that lady nice but it wouldn't." She shrugged her shoulders and I left.

The conciergerie is a fine building overlooking the Seine. I admired it for some time and then went to the office of the Prefect of Police. I got a form filled up and was given the number 162 and directed to a big room swarming with foreigners waiting for their turn to enter a hall where some twelve girl clerks were seated issuing Cartes D' Identite. These girls were chatting and laughing

and proceeding with their work in a horribly leisurely fashion. After waiting for two hours, I found that only number 37 had got in. Some policemen had formed a cordon and were holding back the impatient unfortunates who wanted to get in. They were admitting persons as the girl clerks became disengaged, but there was no queue system as in England, and the admissions were certainly not in strict order. It is remarkable that France which originated the jury and queue systems has not been able to make a thorough success of them while England which borrowed them from her has so assimilated them that the world regards her erroneously as the originator. It is like a kind foster-father being regarded as the real father of a child callously abandoned by its natural father.

I was at first willing to await my turn. But finding that progress was slow and that a gentleman with a number later than mine had been admitted, I gently pushed my way through the crowd to the police line. There, when I was trying to persuade a policeman to let me through on the triple grounds of my not having taken my meals, having an engagement with a friend in the afternoon, and having no other Indians to talk to in that room, a Greek on my left burst out " I with number 53 have not yet been let in, and you with No. 162 want to go in. What justice is this ? " " You represent a petty little nation of five millions which joined the

Allies in the war half-heartedly and at a very late stage whereas I represent a mighty nation of 320 millions which rushed its troops to the rescue of France as soon as the Germans crossed the Frontier" said I. The French policeman said "Bravo!" and let me in with that sense of humour so marked in France.

I went in and was directed to a pert little girl, aged about 20, at one end of the hall. As soon as the porter took me to her, she said smilingly, "Hullo, an Indian! Very good". She asked me my name and surname. It is notorious that no Tamil Brahmin has got a surname. We Tamils in general have got initials representing the village name and father's name, and full names representing our personal and caste names. At Oxford when the difficulty cropped up I gave "Ayyar" as surname and "A. S. Panchapakesa" as name. The ridiculous girl clerk at Paris, however, insisted on writing down my "Nom" (Name) as "Iyer" and "prénoms" (surnames) as "Aiylam S.P."! My protests were of no avail. "You say you are called M. Iyer. Well, what one is called by is his name" she said emphatically. Then my date of birth, names of father and mother and their dates and places of birth and the name of my village were duly taken down. Afterwards my profession was noted down as "Student". When she asked me what my nationality was I said that it was "Indian".

She laughed and said, "Simple soul, there is no such thing as an Indian nation. There is British India, French India, Dutch India and Portuguese India. There is no Indian India. Your nationality is Britannique (British)" and wrote down "Britannique" against nationality. Her remarks stung me to the quick. Had we, the children of the oldest surviving civilization in the world, no right to a separate nationality and were we bound to remain camp followers of four other nations for ever? She saw the pained expression on my face and said "Cheer up, monsieur, you too will become a nation one day if you have the will." Last came the most ridiculous part of the performance. There was a column entitled "State of family—married, bachelor, widow or divorced". I gave the reply as "married". The girl laughed outrageously and said, "You married! You are only a boy! Have you got a photo of your wife? How old is she?" "Twelve" I replied to the infinite merriment of my questioner and her neighbours. "Twelve! Don't talk nonsense" said the girl. "How can a girl of twelve live with you?" "Our marriage is spiritual and not physical" said I. "Oh, you mean you have got a wife in Heaven like the Father in Heaven?" said she laughing. "No" said I. "We Indians marry girls before puberty, but live with them only after they become sixteen or seventeen." "Then, what will happen if you run away with a French girl?" she asked. "I am not

likely to run away with any girl, least of all with a French girl" said I. "You are rude" she declared. I kept quiet. "Well, I see now that what you mean by your marriage is only a betrothal. So, you are a bachelor after all." And forthwith she wrote "célibataire" (bachelor). I protested that I was married and so the correct statement should be entered in the identity card as I was liable for inaccurate statements found therein. "If you gave them and not otherwise" said she. "I shall tell the Prefect" said I. "Do" said she, "Will he guillotine me?" She was right. My complaint to the Prefect was absolutely of no use. "What you call marriage is only a betrothal in our language. Now, monsieur, I am busy" and he sent me away. When the girl asked me for a reference in England and another in France I was at a fix, but finally gave the names of Doctor Arnold and Madame Villard! "Any names will do. It is a mere formality" said the girl. "Now, monsieur, you may go. And, pray don't have any undeserved contempt for France which is any day better than your England." I thanked her and departed. It was 2 P.M. when I stepped out after my above-mentioned ineffectual protest to the Prefect.

I went to a restaurant, took my lunch and went to see the "L' Hotel Des Invalides", the repository of the last mortal remains of Napoleon. The entrance to this magnificent building from the Esplanade

gives one a striking view of the whole. The dome of the Invalides is specially imposing. The triumphal battery containing captured Algerian, Russian, Dutch, Prussian, Venetian, Austrian and Wurtemburg cannon is quite worthy of even a military nation like the French. The Court of Honour with its fine statue of Napoleon by Seurre is splendid. Then there is the Soldiers' Church exhibiting 219 flags captured from the enemy. The choir of the Church of St. Louis is also worth a visit. The principal thing, however, in the Hotel Des Invalides is the tomb of Napoleon. The doors leading to the 'Chapelle Napoléon' are of bronze got by melting cannon captured at Austerlitz. Above the doors are written the ever-famous words of Napoleon in his will, "I desire that my remains should repose on the banks of the Seine in the midst of the French people whom I loved so much." The tomb of Napoleon has no inscription; governor Hudson insisted in his pettiness that only the word 'Bonaparte' should be engraved on the tomb stones, and to this horrid mutilation of the Emperor's many titles his friends, Generals Bertrand and Montholon, did not agree and preferred to leave the three slabs of marble uninscribed. To the right of the tomb stone is a cast of Napoleon's head by Antommarchi. To the left is a crown gifted by the city of Cherbourg in 1841 when the Emperor's remains were brought in triumphal procession from

St. Helena to that port. Round the sarcophagus of Napoleon are twelve statues by Pradier representing the campaigns of the Emperor. Fifty-four flags captured at Austerlitz are grouped round the sarcophagus. With unerring instinct, the French nation has pitched upon Austerlitz as Napoleon's most brilliant victory. Besides Napoleon, the remains of Marshals Turenne, Duroc and Bertrand, Engineer Vauban and Napoleon's brothers, Jerome and Joseph, rest under the dome which is 107 metres high and was constructed in 1706. There is also quite an interesting museum called the "Museum of the Army" in the Invalides exhibiting the arms and armours used in war at different periods.

In the night I went with some Indian friends to the Opera and witnessed a splendid performance of Faust. The Opera House is a fine structure and the shows therein are run by the French Republic which makes a decent profit. The actors and actresses played their parts excellently, and we had a very enjoyable time. The parts of Mephistopheles, Faust and Margaret were played to perfection. All of us Indians who witnessed the performance deplored that we had not such an Opera House so well run in India.

The remaining few days I spent in seeing the museums of the Trocadero, the Trianon, the Musée de Cluny, the Luxembourg, the Palais Royal, the

Tuileries, the Musée Carnavalet, the grand palais and the petit palais and the National Archives. All these abound in Napoleonic relics and, to a lesser extent, the relics of the days of Louis XIV. The palace of Josephine struck me as particularly interesting.

I visited the Sarbonne, the headquarters of the University of Paris, and was introduced to some professors by a kind French friend. The quarter of Paris inhabited by students is called the Latin quarter. There were about 400 Chinese students when I went to Paris but only about 15 Indian students many of whom were from Pondicherry and Chandranagore. French degrees are not popular with British Indian students partly because of the language difficulty but mainly because French degrees are not passports to fat jobs as English ones. The Sarbonne is an impressive building. Its historical associations made me wander to every room, much to the inconvenience of the other Indians who were forced to walk much more than they wanted.

My visit to Musée Guimet was also very pleasant. I saw there a splendid collection of oriental paintings, pictures, photos, curios, etc., much superior to anything I had seen in England. The people there also seemed to know much about Hindu civilization and its wide ramifications in the East and spoke admiringly of the great Hindus of old. This is the difference between England on

the one hand and France and Germany on the other. In England, Indians are almost always treated politely, but they always feel that they are regarded as having no culture and civilization of their own. In France and Germany, many cultured people know something about the great civilization of India.

The Musée Grevin is the Paris counterpart of Madame Tassaud's in London, and it is a delight to visit it. Some stirring war scenes are depicted like the king of the Belgians inspecting a trench during the siege of Antwerp, M. Clemenceau and the marshals Foch and Petain meeting at the front and the rapturous welcome of the French troops in Alsace-Lorraine after the reconquest. A most ridiculous item was the ex-Kaiser sitting in a cage like a convict. This was called 'Expiation'. The figures of the great French Revolution were given due prominence. Louis XVI, his son, the ill-fated Dauphin, and his sister as prisoners in the Temple formed one impressive tableau. Louis XVI in the tower, Marie Antoinette in the conciergerie and Louis XVII as a prisoner in the Temple were subjects of separate tableaux. There is no doubt that the heart of France has been moved by the fate of the unlucky Louis XVII. Indeed, his figure as prisoner, sleeping in a dungeon, with rats all round him eating the scanty food placed for him, in a miserable plate, is very pathetic and such as to

move the worst enemy of Royalty to compassion. Danton, Robespierre, Camille Desmoulins, Bailly, Lafayette, Mirabeau, Marat, Charlotte Corday, Hebert, Fouquier Tinville, Jurès, Legarde, and Madame Roland are all shown true to life; and a sitting of the revolutionary tribunal is also vividly depicted. The persecution of the early Christians, their subterranean life in the Catacombs, an evening at Malmaison, the home of Napoleon's wife Josephine, Napoleon on his death-bed at St. Helena, and Javanese maidens dancing before King Sisowath of Cambodia are other notable tableaux. Another remarkable thing in this museum is the palace of mirages where for the payment of a franc (then three annas) one could go into a room and see it transformed in a second successively into a temple of Brahma, an enchanted forest, and a feast at the Alhambra. This marvellous illusion is created by a complicated and eminently dexterous arrangement of revolving mirrors which have cost the museum more than five thousand pounds.

Before leaving Paris I paid a visit to the Pantheon where sleep in peace Voltaire and Rousseau among others. The greatest rationalist and the greatest apostle of liberty are both entombed there. Rousseau who wrote the burning sentence "Man was born free and is everywhere in chains" specially appealed to me, though a reading of his "Social Contract" had convinced me that he had

advocated liberty and democracy only for the countries in the temperate zone. Scholars have proved that the famous sentence quoted above is sheer nonsense and that man is born not free but as a helpless being entirely dependent on others. But it is the kind of nonsense which goes straight to the heart unlike the dull doctrines of these scholars devoid of emotion and enthusiasm. The motto at the entrance to the Pantheon is befitting that great mausoleum and its august sleepers. It is "Vivre libre ou mourir" (Live free or die!). After rendering obeisance at the tombs of Voltaire and Rousseau, both apostles of liberty in their own way, I returned to my boarding house in a highly contemplative mood.

The next day I had a bath in the Loire. Myself and a Dane went to bathe. A middle-aged woman was in charge of the bath. We hired two bathing suits, which, unlike in England, consisted of mere *langouti*-like garments, for a franc apiece, put them on, kept our clothes in the custody of the woman and plunged into the river. It was cold, but vigorous swimming warmed me up. After fifteen minutes' swimming I returned to Rue Kepler with the Dane. On the way, we picked up a scholar who asked me many things about India and the ancient Hindu civilization. Finally, he asked me, "Do you know why you Indians are treated differently from the Negroes?" I thought this a

somewhat insulting question as even the very thought of treating Indians like Negroes was revolting. Still, knowing that this gentleman had no colour prejudice, I asked him why. "Because" said he, " Indians have still something they can call their own, their dress, their alphabets, their languages, their religions, their music, etc., whereas the poor Negroes are merely third-rate imitators of the West all along the line. If and when Indians lose all the distinctive traits of their nation and become slavish imitators of the West, which God forbid, they too will be treated just as Negroes are treated now."

In a few days I left Paris for an extensive tour in the battlefields in the north-east of France. I saw the Marne and the Somme and the historic towns of Valenciennes, Mons and Rheims. When surveying the battlefield of the Marne, a Frenchman told me with warmth, " If this field had been lost, Paris, beautiful Paris, the creation of centuries, would have been sacked by the Hun beyond all recognition." At Valenciennes, where the French army was cut by the onrushing Germans, an old Frenchwoman who was selling small loaves told me, " Monsieur, my heart broke doubly at this disaster, for a son of mine died here, and the French army was very near a rout." Still, the old lady had heart enough to sell small loaves! At Mons the British were forced to make their ever-famous

retreat. A most remarkable thing in this retreat was the nervous breakdown of several soldiers who took part in it and performed the march all right but dropped down dead like flies at the end of the wearisome and continuous march. The famous cathedral at Rheims was partially damaged by the war, but more through the inevitable destruction of war than through any deliberate vandalism on the part of the Germans. The north-east of France and the south-west of Belgium were literally ploughed up with trenches and the holes made by cannon and tanks. Many abandoned and useless cannon and tanks were still lying on the ground, and there were also a lot of supposed live shells about when I went. There were posters warning visitors not to touch the shells lying about. No one who has not seen the havoc wrought by the war in the fertile regions of north-east France and south-west Belgium can understand the post-war hatred of Germans in those parts. Fields which were noted for the yield of record crops were torn up and deprived of their soil so much so that they could regain their normal fertility only in ten or twelve years. The clearance of the debris of the war materials alone would have required a lot of money. All the trees were destroyed and left with naked stumps riddled with nails and sharpnels. Most of the buildings had been destroyed. As one Frenchman told me, " And we had not even the consolation of invading and

sacking any portion of Germany like this owing to their cunning conclusion of the armistice before we had time to march to Berlin."

The trenches were most interesting. There were still complete trenches visible when I went to the battlefields. The ordinary trench is a damp dingy place very properly named a "dug-out". How the soldiers managed to live in these dug-outs for days together was a marvel to me. Sand bags were heaped on the side of the trenches for the soldiers to take cover when shot at. There were some comparatively comfortable trenches constructed by the Germans for their officers. Some of the officers were said to have brought their wives and lived with them in these. On the whole, I found the German trenches to be better constructed, many being with concrete and more comfortable than the Allied ones, perhaps because the Germans had more time to construct them in. The last great war, so far as the western front was concerned, was largely one of trench warfare. Forts played a great part, no doubt, as is evidenced by the famous sieges of Liege, Antwerp and Verdun, but success in trench warfare was the deciding factor. When I expressed my disappointment with the historic fortress of Lille, so celebrated in Louis XIV's days, after seeing it, since it was far below my expectations in strength, a Frenchman retorted, "Forts were strong in Louis

XIV's time. Now trenches are more important than forts." The famous Hindenburg lines impressed me very much. They were chosen by a first-rate general in the full maturity of his powers. I saw Mount Kemmel, Hindenburg's watch-tower and other important sectors of the lines. A number of other visitors were also surveying the Hindenburg lines with admiration and awe. Even in their shattered state they were terribly impressive. The countless abandoned cannon and tanks round about and the innumerable graves of friend and foe thickly clustered in the vicinity added to the impressiveness. One Swede told us that the Hindenburg lines were constructed even when the Germans were marching on Paris so as to form impregnable protective lines to fall back upon in case of retreat. Truly a wonderful foresight this! It has been aptly said that the first care of every wise general in an advance is to provide for his retreat. One rather exacting American, who was perhaps not willing to see anything great outside America, said, "The famous Hindenburg lines are, after all, not so redoubtable as they made it out when the war was on." "Ha!" said a French captain, "You see them after they have been taken and destroyed. It is just like seeing the dead and decomposed body of a celebrated athlete and exclaiming 'After all, he was not so strong.'" A roar of laughter greeted this just retort. Soon, the question

of 'Who won the war?' cropped up. "We Americans, of course" said the American, not a bit discouraged by his previous discomfiture. "Without our men and money, the war would never have been won by the Allies." "We Frenchmen," said the French captain, "bore the brunt of the first fierce onset and turned the tide. Then, as usual, the Americans and others joined in.". "The contemptible little army won the war" remarked an English gentleman with great impartiality, enforcing it with the remark "and that will be the verdict of history". "Without us Indians I can't see how the Allies could have won the war" said I. "Was India one of the Allies?" asked the Englishman aforesaid with amused contempt. "I hope the future verdict of history will not be passed by persons as ignorant of facts as yourself" said I. "Certainly, the Italians won the war" said an Italian who by his looks appeared to be a hotel-keeper. "Why all this unnecessary discussion?" said an Irishman from Southern Ireland. "All of us helped to win the war and won it" and all agreed. At Ypres, where 150,000 Allies and an equal number of Germans had been killed and every building wrecked in the famous siege of that town, I was struck with the skill of both the contending armies and exclaimed, "How creditable to the defenders that though every building was shattered they still were able to hold the town and how

creditable to the attackers that though they never captured the town they were able to smash every building within it! How wonderful is modern warfare!" "Sir," said an old Belgian, "but our city was smashed between the two, and countless young men killed. I see nothing wonderful in this cruel warfare of modern times. If there is anything wonderful here, it is the way in which whole villages and towns are being rebuilt and the terrible scars of war sought to be effaced by a kind of vast plastic surgery." I agreed. It was indeed delightful to see whole villages in north-eastern France being rebuilt. Even Ypres was being rebuilt when I visited it. The famous mediæval city was again slowly rising from its grave. Modern science made both the instant destruction and rapid reconstruction possible.

After seeing all these battlefields, I returned to England *via* Calais. I went round the little town of Calais and sat on a bench in the park conversing with some citizens. Calais reminded me of Pondicherry, a little spot in a big country occupied for a long time by an alien nation and bound by the very forces of history to revert to the big country in course of time. The people of Picardy are very different from the Normans or the Parisians or the Alsatians or the Gascons though all are French and aggressively so. After some hours' talk and roaming about in the park I went to the seashore. It

was a very clear day, and the chalk cliffs of Dover could be seen with an effort from a particular spot. I boarded the steamer at about 2 P.M. and soon it began to sail. I had kept all my remaining money, namely, ten one-pound notes and change for a pound and a few one-franc pieces, in my purse which was in my inside coat pocket. I had bought the steamer ticket at about 10 A.M. which was the last occasion when I took out the purse. Seeing some oranges on sale on board the steamer, I wanted to take out my purse to buy some and to my horror found that it was not in my pocket. I searched for it in my suit case and elsewhere, but to no avail. Fortunately, the steamer ticket was in a waistcoat pocket. After it had been checked I had kept it there for convenience. But the purse was gone. Either it had fallen down in the park at Calais or had been obligingly picked by some Picardy gentleman to whom I had been talking. The immediate problem was most pressing. Without any money how was I to get to London from Dover? Was I to sell some of my things at Dover? There was not a single Oriental on board the ship to borrow from and I hated to approach any white man, let alone the improbability of his complying with my request. So, I was most depressed and went and sat on my suit-case in a spirit of profound dejection. Many Englishmen who went past walking on the deck enjoying the beautiful weather glared at me with

monocles and naked eyes, but none spoke a word. A Russian, with that instinct peculiar to Orientals and semi-Orientals, came to me and said in English "Fine weather". "Yes" I responded feebly. "Feeling sea-sick?" he queried. "No" said I. "Then? tell me everything" he said in such a sympathetic voice that I told him the whole trouble. "Pooh! is that all? Here, take a loan of five pounds and welcome" said he, taking a five-pound note. I said that I wanted a loan of only one pound and promised to return it as soon as I reached London. "Oh, don't worry about it" said he. "I must return it" said I and took down his address in London. Then, all care having gone, he and I walked briskly round the deck chatting and laughing to the great astonishment of the very Englishmen who had glared at me with monocles and naked eyes. "Inexplicable Orientals" must have been their comment.

I learnt from my Russian friend that he was an emigré and a bitter Anti-Bolshevik and that he had run away from Russia because of his fear of being done to death. "They have robbed me of all my property" said he. "Still, you seem to have a good bit left" said I laughing. "Well, what is this compared to what was mine?" he asked, and I could very well believe him. When talking of Lenin and Trotsky, he used to wax violent. "The first is a fanatic who wants to set fire to the whole

world merely to test his theory. The second is content that there be a fire so that he may pull some logs out of it" he said. "Tell me," I pressed him, "do you believe that the Czar's regime was good?" "On the whole, no, but for us, yes" said he. "Do the Bolsheviks communalize women as alleged?" I asked. "No," said he, "that is a lie. Russian women are too good for that kind of lie to be believed." I asked him what he thought of Karensky. "A good man but weak, terribly weak, will come to no good" was his reply. About the Versailles treaty he was bitter. "Poland and Bessarabia were unjustly taken from us and Constantinople unjustly withheld from us, one of the most faithful allies" he declared. "It is the Bolsheviks who have lost" said I. "No, it is Russia" he declared passionately. "Who will restore these three to a sane Russia when the Bolsheviks have become but a faded though horrid memory?" he demanded passionately. "No, no, whoever rules Russia and demands the restoration of these three has my active sympathy. They may rob me as they like if they protect my country from robbery." "Has not Poland a right to nationality?" I asked. "Has not India a right to nationality? Has not Ireland? Has not Egypt? Has not Korea? Has not Tripoli? Has not Algeria? Has not the Congo? Have not the Philippines? And yet, did the Treaty of Versailles provide for the separation of any of

these?" he asked with bitterness. "How do you say that Constantinople ought to be restored to you? It was never yours" said I. "It was given to us in a secret treaty," said he, "and so I am right in saying that it ought to be restored to us." "When will you return to Russia?" I asked. "When the damned Bolsheviks are gone and a Bourgeois republic on the model of France is established" he replied.

Soon, the ship reached Dover and we boarded a train. We parted at Victoria, shaking hands with one another and hoping to meet again. I went straight to Shakespeare Hut, the Y.M.C.A. Indian hostel, and borrowed a pound from a friend and sent a postal order to the Russian friend. He called at the hostel specially to thank me. We had a lunch and a long talk, and then we parted, never to meet again.

CHAPTER X.

The I.C.S. Examination and After.

ON my return to London from France, I began to prepare seriously for the I.C.S. open competition examination which was to come off in August 1921. I had less than a year before me and had, therefore, to look sharp. Though sitting for the I.C.S. examination was one of the objects for which I had gone to England, no serious steps had been taken by me till August 1920 to prepare for it. I had been too much immersed in sight-seeing and Oxford life to have much time to do anything else. Of course, my study for the Modern History School at Oxford was in a way useful for the I.C.S. examination also since it covered part of the history subjects I intended to take for the I.C.S.

The first thing I did after reaching Oxford and settling down was to choose once and for all the subjects I wanted to take for the I.C.S. I was to be among the first batch to appear for the examination under the new regulations which had thoroughly modernized the old system. Consequently, nobody had any definite idea as to the exact nature of the examination. But like every uncertainty, this too gave as much confidence as it took away. It is notorious that certainty takes away as much confi-

dence as it gives. But for the uncertainty of war, few countries will wage wars with eagerness; and few soldiers will go to fight if death was not uncertain. If safe return or death were certain for all who take part in them, there will not be that much attraction for wars as in the present state of uncertainty. This is then the true psychology of war, its uncertainty, which fascinates millions by the appeal to their gambling spirit. Man, primitive or civilized, has always had a fatal fascination for gambling, the supreme game of chance. Montecarlo with its roulets is only the concretization of the nebulous gambling spirit inherent in man.

The compulsory subjects in the new scheme were an Essay, English, Present Day, Every-day Science, Auxiliary language and *viva voce*. The Essay and English required no special reading or training. Nor could any reading or training improve the chances in the *viva voce* which, though it carried 300 out of the 800 marks allotted for the compulsory subjects, was the most delightfully uncertain of the subjects and the thing allowing of the least training or preparation. There was a general impression abroad that personal appearance and correct accent would go a long way towards impressing the examiners in *viva voce*, and many aspirants deliberately cultivated an affected accent and even laugh and took to the most fashionable dress besides going in for daily shaves. Of course, all this helped them

somewhat when the ordeal did come but not to the extent they anticipated. Some turned out to be veritable jackdaws in peacock's feathers, and perhaps the sudden disillusionment of the examiners was not to their advantage.

Present Day was a paper on modern political, social and economic questions and required a little acquaintance with the leading newspapers and journals. Every-day Science was to us, History students of the Madras University with its too early specialization, something of a nightmare. How were we suddenly to master Chemistry, Physics, Botany, Physiology, Geology, Astronomy and kindred sciences, we whose education had proceeded on the assumption that there would never be any necessity for us to be acquainted with them? But we had to master them. To neglect a subject carrying 100 marks meant taking away many chances of our getting in. I resolved to study Physics, Botany, Physiology, Geology and Astronomy and bought popular books dealing with them. This study alone absorbed as much time as the study of history. For history was a familiar field where I was sure of my ground whereas the sciences, owing to the defective education of the Madras University, were a huge morass where I had a job to obtain a foothold. A mere smattering would be of no use for the I.C.S. for two reasons. The first was that there was what is called deduction for superficial

knowledge. From the total number of marks obtained by a candidate one-fifth of the maximum will be deducted and the remainder multiplied by $\frac{5}{4}$. Thus if a man gets 21 out of 100 his final marks will be $(21—20) \times \frac{5}{4}$ or $1\frac{1}{4}$, that is to say, 1. Those who get 100 will get as final marks 100, $(100—20) \times \frac{5}{4}$ being still 100. Thus the original differences in marks will increase by moderation. There is no custom of giving minus marks. So, if a man gets 8 at first he will get in moderation not $-\frac{12 \times 5}{4}$ or -15 but merely 0. This system of deduction is based on a sound principle. Almost any educated man knows something about common questions, but nothing much. Thus, if asked about the sun any man will say that it rises in the morning in the east and sets in the evening in the west, that it gives us light and heat and that it is essential for cultivation. These are true and so it will be unjust to give this man zero. He must get, say, 5 marks out of one hundred. But to give credit to such superficial knowledge in an examination of the standard of the I.C.S. will be ridiculous. So the deduction for superficial knowledge comes in and reduces this 5, or indeed any mark below 21, to 0. As such superficial knowledge is sure to be mixed up with deeper knowledge up till the standard of the maximum the principle is applied throughout. The second reason was that success in the I.C.S. examination went by relative merit; the deeper one's

knowledge and the greater his marks the greater his chances of success. By a careful choice of books and by attentive reading I finally managed to secure an adequate knowledge of the sciences above named.

The auxiliary language had to be a modern European language. Indians were, however, allowed to offer instead Physical or Social Anthropology. But either of these could be given also as extra numerum. Physical Anthropology required a certificate of training in a University and was moreover with its practical tests not a field where a novice could hope to score high marks. Social Anthropology had therefore to be reserved for the extra numerum subject. In an examination where passes depend on the relative number of marks obtained it is obvious that no candidate will willingly avoid taking an extra numerum subject though it may not be strictly obligatory. Hence I reserved Social Anthropology as extra numerum subject and took French as auxiliary language.

As regards the optionals, I took the whole of British History, European History from 1494 to 1914, and English Private Law. The last comprised the laws of real and personal property, contracts and torts. All the three optionals together carried 1,000 marks, and the extra numerum subject 100 marks. Thus the maximum number of marks for the I.C.S. examination was 1,900.

My principle was to devote six hours, neither more nor less, every day to my studies. My lodgings in Victoria Road in the midst of beautiful country, close to the lovely Cherwell, were ideal for undisturbed study. It was for this reason as also because of the fresh home-grown vegetables procurable there that I had shifted my lodgings thither from Chalfont Road before going to France. What a mental strain it had been to me to give the week's notice to my landlady in Chalfont Road! My Indian sentiment made me strongly averse to telling persons under whose roof I had lived for six months that I wanted to go away. A feeling that I would thereby be breaking the rules of hospitality was working unconsciously within me. Though I was paying £3–10–0 per week, still I felt as if I was under an obligation of hospitality. My Muslim friend Mr. R. learnt my difficulty and in characteristic Muslim fashion declared, "This mawkish sentiment is at bottom a weakness. You must fight it out. I have changed four landladies in the course of four months. I don't see why you should be so silly about this." He promised to come the next day and be present at the momentous announcement. That night I was restless. But my landlady, by her tactlessness, made my task easy. It was the end of term. She said that from the next term onwards I should pay £3–15–0 per week as several persons were offering her that amount. This commercialism

on her part uprooted all my sentimental objections and I said at once, "Please take a week's notice. I am going to leave." This took her by surprise, and she attributed it entirely to her increased demand. "Oh, well," said she, "I didn't mean that you should leave. I am content to receive £3–10–0 from you as heretofore if you are unwilling to pay more." "No, no, that is my final notice," I declared. "All right, then, I take it," said she, "but I can't understand your sudden resolution" and she left. I rushed to Mr. R. and told him, "I have crossed the Rubicon." He shook hands with me vigorously and said, "Well-done, old boy, that is the way to do it." For the next one week I felt as if I was in an enemy country. To remain in rooms after you have given notice is a peculiar situation understandable only by those who have experienced it. Of course, men like Mr. R. may even delight in such situations, but to the normal man they are simply dreadful. I made it unnecessarily gloomier. At meal times I was taciturn and glum. The girls who were bringing the meals noticed this. The oldest among them told me, "Look here, Mr. Ayyar, why do you look as if you are offended? What have we to do with your remaining or leaving? That is between mother and you. Why put on such a gloomy face?" I relaxed a little, realizing the justice of her remark. But I did not completely become myself again.

The next day I returned from the Examination schools after having seen that I had passed in the History Previous with distinction. As soon as I entered Chalfont Road I became gloomy again. My landlady's third daughter came to my room and asked me, "What about your results, Mr. Ayyar? Passed, I hope." "Yes," I said, "with distinction." "Oh, I am so glad," said she and left, leaving me wondering as to why she should be so happy at the success of one who was leaving her house for another. We Indians are less individualistic than the English and set more store by family friendships and quarrels. In India the whole family would have become cold and hostile as soon as I had given notice, and I with my joint family training expected it. But, fortunately, the English have advanced beyond that stage and perhaps were never in that stage. So my expectations were, happily, not fulfilled. But I never felt completely at ease till I had shifted bag and baggage to Victoria Road.

The one year which elapsed between my return from France and the I.C.S. examination passed speedily. Oxford life was very pleasant. I used very often to go and read at the Bodleian. During the Shakespeare festival I went with a few friends to Stratford-on-Avon in a char-a-banc in order to see the house where Shakespeare was born. Shakespeare has always been a favourite with English-educated Indians and has a warm corner in their affections

along with Wordsworth and Shelley. That is perhaps because Shakespeare is universal in his appeal unlike Milton whom I consider to be the most typical English poet. Milton has never been popular among Indian students and has been read in part only because selections from his works are prescribed by the Universities as text-books and thus forced down the throats of unwilling readers. Simply to satisfy the examiners and get through the many-teethed examination machines unhurt, students repeat the pious phrase that Milton is the second greatest English poet. Left to themselves they would prefer to give Wordsworth or Shelley that place. Even Indian examiners are privately of that opinion, but thinking that the Englishmen at the head want Milton to be given the second place, they conceal their real opinions and even penalise students who depart from the supposed authorized views. To such a length has slavish mentality advanced in India. If to-morrow India were to get self-government and rule her own destinies, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and Coleridge will still continue to be read with admiration by Indian students, but all copies of Milton's works will be either thrown away or relegated to the topmost shelves. The affection for Shakespeare is genuine. In fact, one of our college professors, himself an eminent Englishman of much experience, used to say that Indian students evince more enthusiasm for

Shakespeare and enter into his spirit better than English students of the same age.

Our hearts leapt within us as we saw picturesque Stratford on the banks of the slow-gliding Avon. There was a crowd as it was Shakespeare festival. I was filled with the deepest emotion when I saw the room where Shakespeare was born. "Here Shakespeare was born" I said to myself. "It is a thousand pities that no Asoka raised an everlasting pillar on this spot with the inscription 'Here the blessed one was born'." All over the room, and indeed the house, people have scribbled their names in every possible place either with the object of leaving on record their pilgrimage thither or, what is more probable, moved with a desire to perpetuate their names by attaching them to the house where the great immortal was born, in the spirit of the proverb "Hitch thy waggon to a star". There are some famous poets, novelists and prose-writers among these who did this childish scribbling. Now it is strictly forbidden to scribble or to carry away any piece of the house as a memento of the visit. Indeed, but for the latter prohibition, the entire house would have disappeared long ago by mere removal of small bits, such is the crowd visiting the place every day from all corners of the world. Even as it was, an American gentleman was prowling about with a view to take a bit off when he got half a chance, but a caretaker, suspecting

his intention, politely jostled him out on the pretext that more people were coming in and so all those who had seen should please walk out. The yankee came out and told me in a whisper "Gee, that guy isn't so simple as he looks," thus clearly revealing his nefarious designs. Later, we went to Anne Hathaway's Cottage. Poor Anne Hathaway, the neglected wife of the immortal poet, had our full sympathy. But that virtuous woman's house is preserved and visited only because of her faithless husband. Such is the irony of history.

After this we proceeded to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, which was recently burnt down, and witnessed a performance of "As you like it!" The acting was under the direct supervision of the great Shakespearian critic, Sir Sidney Lee, and was, needless to say, superb. We returned to Oxford after a late lunch.

I felt the cold of the winter of 1920 a little more than I did that of 1919. Many other Indians also had the same experience. "What, according to you, is the reason for this strange phenomenon?" asked a friend of mine. I said half-humorously, "The Indian heat stored up in our system was exhausted last winter. Now we have to go without that adventitious aid." My favourite device to combat the cold was an everlasting fire at home and brisk walks in the afternoon. One day, when ice was lying here and there and there was a thick

snowfall, I took my accustomed walk and, as usual, opened the door on my return and stepped into the corridor. No sooner had I done so than my right foot jerked and I fell prostrate to the great merriment of all. Some ice had formed on my heels, and when the right heel came in contact with the smooth, slippery floor it had jerked causing me to fall. Thereafter I took care to scrape the ice off my heels before venturing indoors.

Another funny thing in England is that since all the trees become naked in winter, being deciduous, the only green thing being some ever-green shrubs, few English people who have not gone abroad or studied in a University will believe an Indian when he tells them that most of the trees in India are ever-green. "Go on," said an old English lady to me one day. "We are not so unlearned as to believe such fibs. What next? Do the people of India also live for ever?" And most of the listeners were on her side. These pious people take England as the standard to go by. Of course, they are ready enough to believe that there are great monsters in India, that cobras abound everywhere, that men are viler than the cobras, that human sacrifices are still not unknown, that girl babies are murdered as soon as they are born, that the heat is terrific and the climate execrable and that leprosy, plague, cholera, and venereal disease divide between them the whole population of India except the English garrison

therein. Hence the popularity of morbid books relating to our country like the recent "Mother India". But these people of England who hold such ridiculous beliefs do so only because of ignorance and not from wicked design as Indians are only too ready to believe. The comic side of these ridiculous beliefs is seen in the widely held maxim "India is a land where flowers have no smell, fruits no taste and women no smiles". This of the land which is the home of the jasmine and the champak, the mango, the plantain, the jack and the lime, and women with the most spiritual smiles in the world! At least the last item can be forgiven as respectable Indian ladies never smile at strangers, and in Northern India even cover their faces, and as Englishmen never are allowed, in general, access to high class Indian homes and so cannot pierce the veil of unreality and grasp the reality behind. But the belief about the flowers and fruits is so absurd especially after countless generations of Englishmen have come and gorged themselves on them. I have only one explanation for this. In the early days of the East India Company the servants of the Company were most anxious that other Englishmen should not come to India and share the pagodas with them. But the home Englishmen, envious of the supposed untold wealth of Ind, were clamouring in Parliament and outside for the abolition of the Company's monopoly. Obviously, it was to the Company's interest to depict

India in the most unattractive colours possible so that by this campaign of lies the ardour of many monopoly-breakers might be cooled. Hence the stories of India's smell-less flowers and tasteless fruits, and the blood-curdling accounts about the cobras, human sacrifices, diseases, etc. When in 1813 the Company's trade monopoly was abolished, the propaganda was intensified as the India Government certainly did not want an invasion of Britons of all types and as the legal obstacle having gone, the only remedy was to scare them away by fearsome stories. Much the same kind of stories are told to-day by a certain independent state apprehensive of foreigners and desirous of keeping them away. In this campaign of frightening, the East India Company found a powerful auxiliary in the missionary who, anxious to collect funds in Britain for the conversion of the Heathen in India, was only too willing to countersign and underline the stories of venereal disease, child murder and human sacrifices. After the Crown took over India, the real facts began to filter through, but the lies of centuries had struck deep roots which could not be cut by the paper knives of these feeble truths. As for Indians, with the suicidal genius so characteristic of decadent Hinduism, they cared not to counter these lies with the consequence that they still hold the field.

One day, an Englishman obsessed with these lies told me, " How many of England's sons come

to a premature grave by serving in your pestilential climate !". I said, "I say, have a look at our Civil Lists and see how heavy the list of pensioned English officers is. Surely, the climate which enables them, with their meat and drink habits, to work for 35 years, and then live in England in retirement for 20 to 50 years cannot be so pestilential as you imagine." Some days later, after referring to the Civil List, he recognized that I was right. "Still, India is the land of tears for them, being the land of their exile" he added. "So too is England the land of tears for me, being the land of my exile" I replied. "In both cases, the exile is voluntary and chosen after mature deliberation. So no pity need be wasted on either." "But I don't see you in tears" he said. "Nor are Englishmen in India in tears if you will only go and see them there" said I laughing.

The fact is that the climate of India is much better than that of England. We need only few clothes and simple meals and get free baths in our rivers and tanks. So India's poor are not troubled with the anxieties of coal for the fire and money for the thick clothes and even baths. Again, in the heat of summer, we can take refuge, if need be, in the cool heights of our hills. In England, there is no such Nature's safety-valve from cold. For, the question of a school-boy to me whether there are not deep hollows in England where people can take refuge from the cold of winter just as we have hills

to resort to in summer must be answered in the negative. Whatever else India is ashamed of she has no need to be ashamed of Nature's gifts. This beautiful country with its sublime mountains and rivers, glaciers and lakes, hills and dales, trees, flowers and fruits and its excellent climate need not fear comparison with any other country, for Mother India is certainly the most dowered daughter of Grandmother Nature.

The months sped on rapidly. In June 1921 I received intimation that my *viva voce* was to be on July 5th. The written examination was to be in August. Some persons thought that the intention in thus making the *viva voce* precede the written examination was to weed out those found unfit at the *viva*. But that was not the idea. Perhaps the intention was merely to get the students at their best before the strain and the worries of the written examination had tired them out and brought about mental fag.

The day after I got the above communication I returned to my rooms after playing tennis and felt feverish. After half an hour the fever increased and I went to bed. This was my first sickness in England. That night I took only a cup of hot lemonade. I had hoped that sleep would take away the fever. The next morning, however, the fever had increased and there was pain in the throat. A competent doctor was called. He examined my

throat and was of opinion that it was diphtheria, a disease for which municipal treatment with segregation for forty days was compulsory at Oxford. That would mean, of course, that I could not sit for the I.C.S. examination that year, a terrible blow for one who had gone to England for no other purpose but this. No doubt, there would remain the second chance in 1922, but in any case one chance would be lost and one year's more stay in England necessitated with its waste of time, money and energy. It was a prospect which would have driven any man in my position to despair. To my own utter surprise now I was not crushed by the prospect but took the news stoically. Perhaps for the only moment in my life till now I resigned myself entirely into the hands of God and said to myself, "He knows all. Nothing that He wills can be ultimately injurious to me." My landlady and the doctor saw me plunged in thought. The landlady had told the doctor about the examination and the impossibility of sitting for it if this were diphtheria. So he said sympathetically to me, "I am sorry for you, you may not be able to sit for the examination. Don't worry over-much about it as it may affect your health." "I don't worry at all" I replied. "Who can resist the dictates of Him above? What is ordained must come about." The doctor went taking some stains from the throat in order to examine them in his laboratory and see whether it

was really diphtheria or merely tonsilitis. He promised to call in the evening and let me know finally as to what it was, adding that if it were diphtheria he would instruct the municipal ambulance car to come round. Downstairs he told my landlady, as I learnt afterwards, "I am sorry for the young man. Still it is remarkable how his fatalism helps him. Even a superstition has its advantages." I suppose a non-Christian's belief in the immutability of God's decrees is fatalism whereas the same belief in a Christian will be implicit surrender to God! In the evening the worthy doctor came and declared that the thing was mere tonsilitis and could be cured in five or six days. I was full of joy at this news. In six days I was thoroughly cured of the sickness, which the doctor declared I had caught in the tennis courts. As per his orders, I left for Torquay for ten days for a change to recoup my health.

The climate of Torquay did me good. In the refreshing breeze of Torquay I quickly recovered my lost health and spirits. I was also taking a vegetable tonic. Daily I used to bathe in the sea twice. There were separate bathing places for men and women and a third bathing place for mixed bathing. The first two were not at all frequented, and the third place alone was crowded. There were small sheds for dressing and undressing and leaving one's clothes. The rent was six pence per bath. About a hundred yards from the beach was a raft to which

the more enterprising bathers of both sexes used to swim. Then they used to jump from the raft which had special arrangements for jumping. I also took to this practice. To my utter surprise I found that most English people jumped head foremost whereas most Indians, including myself, jump feet foremost. The advantage in our arrangement is that there is no risk of the head being dashed against rocks, and the time taken to rise to the surface is less as the spring of the feet on striking the floor makes the rising-up much quicker. My English fellow-bathers were as much surprised at my mode of jumping as I was at theirs, but, learning my reasons, soon took to my method as being easier, more efficient and less risky. After some jumping we did some diving and submarine swimming in which I defeated them. All this made them think that I was an expert in these matters, and, soon, a man calling himself a swimming race organizer asked me to become with him a co-organizer, a thing which I discreetly declined.

In Torquay I could do no reading. The holiday atmosphere of the place was not conducive to study. Besides, the doctor had asked me not to do any reading but to take complete rest. In view of the nearness of the examinations and the thoroughly incomplete nature of my preparations it seemed to me now and then while at Torquay that my position was not far different from that of Nero who played the

lute while Rome was on fire. Still, as I believe in implicitly following doctors in matters of health just as I follow barbers in matters of hair-dressing, I obeyed the worthy doctor's injunctions to the letter.

At the end of the holidays I found that my ears had become blocked, and, so, as soon as I returned to Oxford, I repaired to the doctor. He told me that the trouble was caused by surf-bathing on which subject he gave me a long lecture to which I willingly listened as it might come in handy either during the *viva* or in the papers on Everyday Science or Present Day. A more tedious and altogether unpleasant business was to get the ears syringed for three or four days. Finally, some three days before the *viva*, my ears were normal again.

The fifth of July was the day fixed for my *viva*. On the fourth I left Oxford and went to London. I put up at Shakespeare Hut, the Y.M.C.A. Hostel in Keppel Street. When it was first started I had conscientious objections to reside there. I had never been an inmate of any missionary institution, and the Y.M.C.A., one of whose objects is proselytisation to Christianity, was regarded by me with suspicion especially as at first weekly lectures by an evangelist were part of the fixtures. But the poor man of religion fared ill with the crowds of heathens, and, heckled with all kinds of questions, resolved to give up the attempt for the moment and

await a more favourable opportunity. This worthy man's abstinence gained some new converts to the Y.M.C.A. hostel. Cromwell Road offered no Indian dishes, and the hotels supplying them charged exorbitant rates. Shakespeare Hut was the only place in London where vegetarians could get Indian vegetarian dishes cheap. Rooms too were cheap. They were called cubicles from their geometrical shape. There were cubicles for one and cubicles for two. The single cubicles were so small that one wit said that a tall man would have to lie diagonally in order to stretch himself at full length. Single cubicles cost a little more than a half share in a double cubicle, but were worth the price. The furniture in the cubicles was Spartan in its simplicity, and invitations to sit on one's trunks and suit cases, for lack of chairs, were by no means uncommon. This defect in furnishing was, to some extent, made up by the decent furnishing of the drawing room and library where friends could be received without the aid of trunks and suit cases. The chief attractions of Shakespeare Hut were the meals and the baths. The luxurious shower baths of the hut still make me wish to be there though I know that the hut has been dismantled and that where Indians alone were to be found then no Indians will be seen now. The multiple attractions of Shakespeare Hut made me surrender, and I became in due course a regular inmate of that

institution. The wardens and officers were all Christians, but it is due to them to say that they never discriminated against the heathens who flourished and grew fat under their beneficent rule. There was a gymnasium in Shakespeare Hut where all kinds of games, including jujutsu, were played.

Life in the hostel was very pleasant, so pleasant indeed that many Indians were content to pass their English existence there without caring to know the real England outside. Though the original founders of the hostel reserved a certain proportion of seats for English and Colonial students, there were, in practice, no such students. The reasons were two. All the available seats were required by Indians, and the warden was unwilling to turn a single Indian out if he could help it. Again, few Englishmen or Colonials sought admission to this hostel with its Indian atmosphere and exotic meals. Hence the hostel was purely a little India beyond the seas. Many Indians manfully struggled to induce the inmates of the hostel to mix freely with English people outside. It is easy to preach, difficult to practise. These very apostles were seen by me daily coming to the hostel though, to save their faces, they began the preaching at the end. One day, I asked a very prominent exponent of this view "Why don't you try to devote some evenings to England instead of devoting them all to little India?" He coloured and said "Young man, that is the very lesson I want to

teach all of you." "Why not teach by example?" I put in. "Forsooth!" was the ingenious reply. "How are you to see me mixing with English people in the evenings when you never stir out of this place? Why, for aught I know, you people may even think that I am sleeping in my room in the evenings I am not here." I laughed. He had saved his face and was disposed to be good-humoured. He made a great many enquiries about me and, on parting, adjured me not to confine myself to the hostel but to mix with Englishmen freely. He saw no absurdity in this. Such is the force of habit.

The fifth of July was a bright day. I woke up at 5-30 A.M. and took a beautiful shower bath. Just when I was about to come out, I heard a piercing cry from the next bath room and rushed to the door of that room. Four or five others had also come there. Presently, the door flung open and a new arrival rushed out yelling "Damn this Christian hostel! Damn these shower baths! I am scalded!". To our infinite amusement we saw that the poor man had only turned on the hot water tap and not the cold water one also, with the result that he had got the boiling water ejected on him in full force! The steaming fluid was still pouring down, for the terrified bather had taken to a precipitate flight without taking care to turn the tap off. We soon explained to him that his baptism of fire was not due to the Christian atmosphere of the place but to his own

ignorance of elementary principles. We demonstrated to him also that if both the hot and cold water taps were turned on and adjusted to one's taste no bath could be more ideal or enjoyable. Our lectures were wasted on him. He sought refuge in the ordinary cistern baths and could never be persuaded to take to shower baths again. As he was an ardent Home-Ruler, we used to tell him afterwards in joke "Home Rule cannot be won by people who dread shower baths" to his great fury and our infinite merriment.

After taking a good breakfast, I proceeded to Burlington Gardens for the *Viva Voce.* Mine was fixed at 10-25 A.M. As my name 'Ayyar' began with the first letter of the alphabet, I was the second person to undergo the ordeal, the first being a Bombay gentleman called Mr. Amin. So I had to go in without any the least notion of what would be the nature of the test. I went in with a light heart as I had never fared badly in talking.

When I entered the room, the five examiners looked at me critically. So, dress and general appearance perhaps mattered something, after all. The Chairman asked me to sit down on a chair opposite the table and facing the row of my questioners. Then one by one the examiners tackled me. The first asked me general questions. "Which is your province?" "Madras." "A Brahmin, I suppose?" "Yes." "What do you think about

the caste system?" "It was a very useful institution in days of yore, helping specialization of work, caste brotherhood, mutual aid and public institutions and making for national dignity and racial purity. In later times, however, these benefits have almost come to vanishing point, and the original evils of the system, caste rivalry, stagnation, denial of opportunity to the deserving, lack of unity, weakness in the face of the common enemy, deterioration in the standard of the very arts the castes were intended to foster, false pride, racial arrogance and the appalling outcaste system have increased so much so that a united Indian nation cannot be envisaged without at least the partial destruction of the caste system and its excrescence the outcaste system." "How do you say that the caste system ever made for national dignity?" "Because the proudest conquerors, Muslim or British, found that there were some citadels which they could not capture even from the abject conquered population, free entrance into high caste homes and intermarriage with high caste women for instance. Their arrogant contempt for the conquered population was met by an equally arrogant contempt of the conquered for the conquerors in social matters. This in the early days of conquest undoubtedly helped to uphold national dignity." "What do you think of the outcaste system?" "It is a curse of the most unmitigated description and a deep stain on the fair face of

Hinduism." "What do you think of Mr. Gandhi? I want your frank opinion." "I do not agree with many of his political or economic principles, but I do feel that he is the noblest Indian alive and one of the noblest men." "You think so?" "Yes." "What is the secret of his hold on Indians?" "It is simply this. He is the one man among India's 315 millions who has no axe of his own to grind, not even a golden axe. This the masses know and, therefore, worship him. Doubtless, his ascetic life, simple dress, unrestrained manners and boundless tolerance have also helped." "Which of his services to the country do you appreciate most?" "His burning appeals for the abolition of untouchability and for intercommunal unity." "Don't you think there is something inconsistent between his professions and practice as regards the railways and telegraphs? A man who condemns them still uses them more than perhaps any other Indian. How do you explain this?" "He simply says that they are neither necessary for, nor an indication of spiritual greatness; he never condemns their use so far as I have been able to make out." "Don't you think his spinning wheel propaganda is bound to fail?" "Yes, with the intelligentsia. But agriculturists who have four months of enforced unemployment every year may take to the spinning wheel with great profit." "Oh, that may be true."

Another examiner began to put his questions. "Do you think that India is more spiritual than

England ?" "It all depends on what you mean by 'spiritual'. If a greater number of spiritual giants in a country makes it more spiritual, certainly India is more spiritual than England since she has produced a Buddha, a Mahavira, a Chaitanya and a Tulsi Daṣ, a record which England cannot equal. But if we take into consideration, as we certainly must, the treatment meted out to the lowest classes in the land, England is more spiritual as she has no unseeables, unapproachables and untouchables unlike India and thus is nearer to God than India. If Mr. Lloyd George were to ask common labourers to move a hundred yards away on the score of pollution and enforce this by beating, as many a high caste Hindu does in Malabar to this day, he will be shot dead, and I am afraid no twelve men in England will find them guilty of murder. Lastly, if by spiritual is meant pre-occupation with gods, devils and other super-physical beings for obtaining material benefits in this and in the next world, India is more spiritual."

A third began. "You have taken up history. Do you think that there is a movement towards a world state?" "No, but there is a movement towards a federation of the States of the world which really matter." "What are the dangers which this federation has to encounter?" "The independent States which have been kept out of it, the independent States which have chosen not to

enter it, the dependent States not allowed within it, the petty independent States within it, the dependent States within it, the races which are not States and are perforce excluded from it, and the war spirit inherent in certain races."

Another began. "I see you have taken up law. Your Hindu Penal Law was pretty barbarous, wasn't it?" "Yes, but nothing compared to Anglo-Saxon Law." "The Brahman was immune from hanging and must have had a good time." "Yes, so too woman. But the records do not show that either Brahmins or women took to murder as a trade as we should expect from this defect in the law. Even now in Travancore and other orthodox Hindu States, Brahmins and women continue to enjoy the immunity. I myself saw a Brahmin who had killed four persons including two tender babes escape the gallows and suffer mere imprisonment for life instead. As for women, however, rarely are they hanged even in England. So, the real difference here is that our law said what your convention brings about in a round-about way." "But how free your law-givers were with capital sentences!" "I don't think that they would have compared unfavourably with any of their contemporaries. Indeed, till Peel's reforms, a thief or pick-pocket stealing above a shilling had a more gruesome fate in England than his brother in India." "I suppose so" said the examiner laughingly. "Well, good morning", and I left.

The examiners were absolutely without any prejudice. They never penalized opinion as my marks showed. But they were insistent that the opinions should be grounded on reasons. Two of my Mahratta friends were questioned as to who was the greater, Tilak or Gokhale, and the man who upheld Tilak got the higher marks. Of course, this was not because of his opinion and might perhaps have been due entirely to his other answers but the example will serve to show that the examiners were above all prejudice. As Englishmen, it is certain that they must have regarded Tilak as more or less of an enemy compared with the genial Moderate, Gokhale, but still they didn't import their prejudice in the marking. Much of the prestige of the I.C.S. examination depends on the scrupulous impartiality and meticulous fairness of the examiners. One Indian candidate, when asked what he thought about the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, replied that they were unsatisfactory, disappointing and illusory. Asked to point out the unsatisfactory, disappointing and illusory features, he confessed that he had not read the Act. "And you want to be an Indian Civil Servant—a Judge or a Magistrate—you who presume to deliver a judgment without knowing the facts!" was the crushing retort. A sprightly friend of mine actually sang a song to the examiners to illustrate his statement that his vernacular (Gujarathi) was very musical, and didn't fare any the worse for it.

The written examinations commenced on the 1st of August and dragged on for many days. About 150 had put in their names, some 70 Europeans and 80 Indians and Ceylonese. But only 113 sat for all the papers they had offered. The rest, despairing of success by the way in which they had fared in the earlier papers, dropped out of the show informally.

At last, even the examinations ended. The horrible monotony of the period was relieved a little by the lively atmosphere of Shakespeare Hut which I had made my headquarters for the whole period. From the very outset I had not liked one thing about Shakespeare Hut. That was the notice board which announced that it was a hostel for students from India and Ceylon. That this ridiculous little island, which was about the size of Mysore and wholly Indian, should claim a separate existence, nay, should actually be paraded as an equal of India, struck me as ludicrous. When I gave vent to my feelings, a Ceylonese asked defiantly " Why not? Legally, Ceylon is not India." " True", said I "Long live India and Ceylon, the eastern counterpart of England and the isle of Wight, or, to take a more precise legal analogy, England and the Isle of Man!" All the Indians roared with merriment at the discomfiture of the Ceylonese. Particularly uproarious was a Bengali friend. The Ceylonese said to him, " I will be even with you one day"

and departed with ill-assumed dignity. Two days later, this Bengali friend casually said in conversation "The Bengali nation will not put up with such insults" referring to some government order or other appearing in the newspapers. At once the Ceylonese flared up "Ceylon is any day more of a country than the Bengalis a nation. What a delightful idea! The Bengali nation, the Behari nation, the C. P. nation, the U. P. nation, the Rajput nation, the Baluchi nation, the Madrasi nation, the Bombay nation, the Berari nation, the Punjabi nation, the Kashmiri nation, the Cochin nation, the Nizam nation, the Assam nation, the Travancore nation, the Mysore nation, the Bahawalpur nation, the Tinnevelly nation, and the Indian nation! Is there anything more ridiculous than this congeries of nations?" All the listeners roared with merriment. The poor Bengali was crushed. The Ceylonese shook hands with me and said "Let us be chums again. You have laughed impartially at me and at him."

More than six weeks elapsed between the commencement of the examinations and the announcement of the results. At last the results were announced. I found that I had passed as I had expected. Sixteen candidates were notified to be selected. Five Indians and eleven Europeans would have got in if the first sixteen had been selected. But those were days when Non-Co-operation was at

its height. So, many Europeans preferred the colonies to India. Hence thirteen Indians and three Europeans were finally selected. We were all medically examined which meant parting with two guineas apiece for fifteen minutes' scrutiny of our physical system.

After selection we had to spend one year in England studying the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Evidence Act, Hindu and Muhammadan Law, Indian History, the vernacular of the province to which we were posted, and Riding. At the end of the year there would be the Final Examination, and after that we would be able at last to return to the land of our birth. For this one year the government paid us a stipend of three hundred and fifty pounds after our executing a bond with one surety, who must be a government official in India or a resident of England, to refund the money in case we failed to pass the final examination, or, having passed, failed to sign the covenant. I had no friend or relative in government service who would be likely to execute the bond. And which Englishman would care to be a surety for a stranger like me? I mentioned my embarrasments casually to Mr. Baker, the Censor of the Non-Collegiate Delegacy. To my astonishment he took the bond from me and signed it. I blurted out my thanks. "Oh, no, this is nothing" he said to me and soon sent me out of the room to escape more thanks.

This overwhelming kindness on his part towards an alien coming from 6000 miles away and known only slightly to him literally staggered me. I thought what a pity it was that men of Mr. Baker's type did not go out to India in any large numbers. If they did, Indo-British relations will be much sweeter than now.

There were lectures at the Indian Institute on all the subjects prescribed for the I.C.S. Final Examination except Riding. The lectures on the Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code and Evidence Act were by Sir E. J. Trevelyan, a retired High Court Judge, and were interesting and instructive. He used to classify Indian witnesses into "liars, damned liars and experts", a classification which is not entirely unjust. Of course, there are more "experts" in England than in India. He also related a funny story of how, boiling with righteous indignation at a diabolical murder of the most brutal type proved to the hilt by the prosecution, he was about to pronounce the judgment sentencing the accused to be hanged by the neck till he was dead when there was a bustle in court and the alleged murdered girl entered as live as ever! The same gentleman lectured on Hindu and Muhammadan Law but with less effect on us, Indians. Still, even here, we got our fair share of laughter. He used to pronounce "Bandhus" (relatives of a particular variety) like 'Bantus', and we Hindus knew that the

former were as destructive of property and as hostile as the latter. The Indian History lectures fell flat on those of us who had taken History as our optionals for our B.A. degree examinations. The standard was low, and the treatment none too lively. But the lectures on Tamil and Telugu beat everything else. The Civil Service Commissioners had declared that Malayalam was my mother-tongue and that I might take Tamil. I knew neither to read nor to write Tamil till then though in Malabar we used to talk a jargon of Tamil mixed with Sanskrit and Malayalam words innumerable. So I had to learn to read and write Tamil in England under an Englishman! It must be said that the readers in South Indian Vernaculars at the Oxford University are by no means so well versed in their subjects as the other lecturers and readers. The consequence was that I found the class of the Tamil reader with its charge of five guineas per term so useless in the second term that I ceased attending it in the third term and thus saved five guineas. My friend in the Telugu class did the same.

The Riding lessons were more strenuous. Our test was a stiff one including jumping three feet, trotting without stirrups, cantering and saddling and bridling. At Oxford I took some lessons which were not of great use. The real lessons which made me a good rider were given by Captain Barry of Woolwich Arsenal at a rate cheaper than that of

Oxford. We had three examinations in all in riding and I got off creditably in all of them.

While I was studying for the I.C.S. Final Examination I had also to study for the final examination of the History Honours School at Oxford. In June the latter examination was over and in September the former. These two represented the last examinations I had to appear in England prior to returning home. I had resolved to visit Belgium and Germany in the interval between the I.C.S. Final Examination and the signing of the Covenant. So, when the last paper of the I.C.S. Final Examination had been answered and the riding test was over, I threw all the books into my giant pinewood case, took a tracing of the map of Germany and Belgium and soon settled my plan of touring. Three days more saw me with my familiar suit cases on the boat bound for Ostend.

CHAPTER XI.

In Belgium and Germany.

THE journey from Dover to Ostend was very pleasant. The sea was calm and the weather beautiful. Ostend is a picturesque port and is somewhat busier than Calais. I had little trouble with the Customs people. As soon as the customs officer saw me, he said in French 'You need not open all these cases. What do they contain?' 'Mere clothes and books' said I. 'I can take the word of an ally. We Belgians shall never forget the splendid response made by India to our appeal for help. You may pass, Sir,' said he, and I went thanking him for his kind words and pleased at this generous recognition of India's services. This gratitude is expressed all over Belgium, and many little acts of courtesy are rendered to Indian tourists. The tourist will, however, discover soon that, among Belgians themselves, there is no love lost between the French-speaking Walloons and the Flemish-speaking Flamands. The racial distinction has always existed, and the currency notes contain inscriptions in both the languages. Even in physical appearance the two races differ, the Walloons resembling the French, and the Flamands the Dutch. The natural animosity was considerably acerbated by the action of many Flamands in supporting the Germans during their occupation of the

country. The Walloons resented this lack of patriotism and, when Belgium recovered its independence, put many Flamands into prison. Now and then the other party used to make huge demonstrations for their release. When we remember that Belgium was one of the worst sufferers in the Great War, we can easily understand and forgive the vindictive conduct of the Walloons.

I boarded the train for Brussels. The train was one of those delivered by Germans as part of the indemnity and was superb in its equipment. The country between Ostend and Brussels was flat and uninteresting but thickly populated and well cultivated. The ancient towns of Ghent and Bruges presented an old-world and picturesque appearance from the train. Brussels was reached at nightfall. I found two hotels full up and a third one prohibitive in its charges. A Belgian gentleman directed me to a hotel where the charges were moderate, and the accommodation good according to him. The accommodation was quite good, but my suspicions were roused by seeing a number of persons drinking at the bar. I wondered whether this was a hotel like the one mentioned in 'The Cloister and the Hearth'. The locality was a comparatively lonely one and not unsuited for robberies and murders. It was, however, late in the night, and I knew not where else to go. So I resolved to brave it. A big burly woman showed me the room after

taking me up two flights of steps. The smell of liquor about her was not calculated to allay my fears. The stairs were also dark since the electric lights were insufficient in number. After seeing the room and putting my luggage there, I came down and had a lean dinner of bread, butter, potatoes, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and lemonade. Then I wanted to go to a theatre or cinema. I found a long queue waiting outside the principal theatre and so returned, especially as I felt sleepy. Going up to my room, I undressed and tried to lock the door from inside. I discovered to my horror that the lock was thoroughly out of repair and so rang up the landlady and asked her about it. 'It has been so for years' said she, 'and nobody has worried. There are no robbers here.' I had perforce to be content with this most unsatisfactory reply, and make what arrangements I could for warding off midnight attempts. I adopted my patent device. Shutting the door, I leaned my umbrella against it. On the top of the umbrella I put my hat and railbag. On the top of all this I put my soap-box. Any person unlawfully hankering after my goods and opening the door at midnight would, of course, bring the whole structure rattling down and wake me up. After finishing the barricading I went to bed, putting out the light and fell asleep. I was woke up by the sound of my things falling down. In great trepidation I got up from bed, sure that

some thieves or robbers in the pay of the hotel-keeper were entering my room. To my shame and surprise I found that it was only the landlady with the hot water and that it was broad morning. The good woman was frightened at the terrific noise and asked me what all that was. 'Oh, nothing ; I had kept a few things there. That's all. You need nor worry,' said I. 'Monsieur,' said the woman, 'I have not kept a hotel for all these years without learning a thing or two. That was your burglar-guard. Very ingenious.' And the woman laughed outrageously. All that day the customers of the hotel were regaled with this story while they had their drop.

I spent that day in seeing Brussels. It is a nice town with a number of fine buildings. The High Court, the King's Palace, the Town Hall, the Corporation Houses, the Exchange, and the Church of St. Gudule with its Chair of Truth, are some of the finest. The Chair of Truth is a fine representation of the driving-out of Adam and Eve from Paradise, and was presented to the Church by a prosperous merchant of Antwerp. Other interesting monuments are the statues of Egmont and Horne, the Congress Column, the Anspach Memorial and the Manneken-Pis. The Park is also a splendid one, and is usually lighted after seven. On the whole, Brussels is quite a nice capital for a small country like Belgium.

Leaving Brussels, I went to Liege and saw the historic fort which put up such a heroic defence during the Great War and gave much valuable preparation time for the Allies. The country near Liege is very pretty and continues to be so till the German frontier. From Liege I went to Cologne passing the famous city of Aix-La-Chapelle or Aachen, which is the frontier town of Germany though at the time I went it was within the occupied area. Cologne was reached in the evening. At Aachen I had met a Jew and an Algerian Muslim and made friends with them. They told me that they knew of an excellent and cheap hotel. So I accompanied them and secured a good room for two hundred marks, or six pence at the then rate of exchange, per day. Excellent vegetarian meals were to be had for a similar sum though there was hardly any variety. After dinner we went to a good theatre and witnessed an interesting opera. The songs and scenes were better than in England though the acting was inferior. One of the delights of Cologne is the Rhine. Cologne was occupied by the British, and there were hosts of Englishmen about. The English were not unpopular among the Germans and there was free social intercourse between the two races. This was in remarkable contrast to the bitter animosity between the French and the Germans. Perhaps, the difference was due to the fact that the English employed no coloured troops in the occupied

zone and had not annexed any portion of the old German Empire. In the area occupied by the British life was normal ; in the area occupied by the French there was an absence of mirth among the Germans who almost appeared as if they were in mourning. Thus, while Cologne was rolling in mirth, adjoining Coblenz was full of gloom except among the garrison of occupation and the foreign merry-makers. Even these latter were comparatively few as nobody likes to spend his holidays in an air of gloom. All the restaurants of Cologne were full and were open till a late hour. The taverns and gambling dens were also having a roaring trade. It struck me as strange that a defeated nation should be so merry. I questioned a German of some culture. He replied, 'It helps to drown our sorrow. Besides, we work all day and want some recreation during the night. Further, there is no incentive to save as all savings will ultimately be absorbed either by a war or by the reparations committee or by the Bolsheviks.' Much the same reasons were given to me at Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden. The whole of Germany was characterised by reckless drinking and gambling at the period when I visited it. One of the most glorious things about Cologne is its splendid Cathedral. When I saw it in the evening with the rays of the setting sun falling on it and a host of doves hovering about it, I felt a strange exaltation of heart as no wireless or air-ship can ever produce. Some

of the products of the Middle Ages are unrivalled by anything in the same line produced by the modern world.

I went up the Rhine to Wiesbaden. The journey was most pleasant. The scenery on both sides was enchanting. The steamer in which I travelled was a fairly big one, and the Rhine was in places like a lagoon. The waters of the Rhine are delightfully blue, and the river is broad and deep with fertile lands on both banks. Some of the most picturesque castles in Europe are on the banks of this great river. Rhinestein is a characteristic specimen. The ruins of Gutenfels with the present village below the hill are also quite interesting. Loreley is another beauty spot. Coblenz and Bonn were other interesting places on the banks of the river. At both these places there are handsome bridges for which the Rhine is famous. The bridge at the ancient university town of Bonn is specially pretty. Towards evening we reached Wiesbaden.

Wiesbaden is a pleasure-resort and is also noted for its mineral waters. I went with some friends to the mineral water well and took a glassful. The taste was most horrible and but for my early training in drinking castor oil I would never have been able to drink it. I sincerely pitied the many rheumatic elderly gentlemen sitting round in a ring and drinking the untoothsome fluid with the resigned air of sacrificial sheep. But, for this discomfort

they get ample compensation in the many pleasures of the gay city. The theatres, dancing halls, music-halls, taverns, restaurants and gambling dens of Wiesbaden are among the best in Germany.

From Wiesbaden I proceeded to Berlin. The exchange was so favourable that a first-class ticket cost me only twelve annas though in the ridiculously depreciated German currency the fare of four hundred and fifty marks would have sounded high and even prohibitive. A German teacher travelling in the second class told me with feeling, 'Things are so bad here that soon only foreigners can live in comfort in Germany. The Fatherland is in a very bad plight, but doubtless it will revive as it did after Jena.' 'Do you like the Ex-Kaiser?' I asked. 'He had many defects, but his reign till 1914 was the most glorious period in Germany's long history' was the reply. 'Don't you think that he should not have dragged Germany into the Great War?' I asked. 'Yes, it was a bad mistake' he replied, 'he and we counted on victory and our calculations went wrong. We have paid the penalty since and are still paying it.' He became so melancholy that I left the corridor and returned to my compartment. After some time he came to me and said 'Forgive me, Sir, for my agitation. I feel the downfall of my Fatherland keenly. Why should it have come in my time? The "Deutschland Uber Alles", which I loved to hear before the war, I detest now.

Talks of a glory which has departed are specially painful. The famous song about the Rhine I have forbidden in my house as it makes me burst into impotent tears. In all these dark clouds my only consolation is that the Fatherland has preserved its unity despite the awful calamities which have befallen it and the repeated attempts of our most inveterate enemy. You, who have not known political greatness in the past, can never realize the depth of our feelings.' Again he became moody and said, 'Farewell, I shall be miserable for the rest of the journey and do not desire to make you too miserable.' He was a veritable picture of pure misery as he left me. I arrived at Berlin in the evening and went in a taxi to Lindenstrasse where I had arranged with a German family for my stay.

I found Herr and Frau N. waiting for me. There were four members in the family, husband, wife, daughter, and mother-in-law, the last meaning, as usually in western countries, the wife's mother. After the formal greetings were over, we had our tea. Then we went out for a stroll leaving Frau N. to do the cooking. She got an elaborate statement from me as to what I would eat and would not eat, and with German thoroughness wrote it all down in what she called her cooking diary. I knew no German and she knew no English or French. So my Jew friend had to interpret my French into German. I was to pay

two thousand marks per day for lodging and boarding; as a pound was equal to ten thousand marks then, I didn't mind paying this sum though it was undoubtedly high compared with the prevailing rates elsewhere in Berlin. Of course, the Jew told me that I was getting the cheapest terms imaginable though I had every reason to believe that he was to pay much less. One day, I point-blank asked him about this. 'Oh,' said he, 'supposing I pay only fifteen hundred per day, it is because I have no dietary scruples like you and do not cause extra trouble in cooking. Besides, I am an old customer, and Germans always make allowances for that.' I did the best thing possible under the circumstances and made the payments directly to Frau N. though my friend wanted me to pay through him and was apparently disappointed at my neglect to accept his services. I must say, however, that the lodging and boarding I got were as good as could be desired.

Our stroll in the evening was very short. We went to the Royal Theatre and bought tickets. All foreigners, meaning by that term all who were not German or Austrian subjects, were charged five times the fare. The reason alleged was the favourable exchange; but as some foreign countries were also having adverse exchanges I was not convinced. Of course, the reason was not entirely frivolous as even with the increased rates the Englishman or Indian or American was paying a

lesser fraction of his income than the German. This is very often forgotten by the indignant foreigner.

The dinner was enjoyable, and I ate heartily of the simple vegetable dishes cooked for me. Frau N. was very anxious to know whether the cooking was all right, and urged me to eat more. 'You pay me a large sum, and it will be a shame if you were starved' said she. 'Don't fear; I know to take care of myself' said I. 'That you undoubtedly do' said my Jew friend, and I thanked him for the compliment. After dinner we went to the theatre and enjoyed a very fine performance. One thing which astonished me was that chocolates containing cognac were publicly being sold in the theatre during half-time and that German young men were buying these and giving them to their lady friends who were swallowing them greedily. On my expressing my astonishment Frau N. said, 'What is good for men is good for women too. I myself wouldn't care to marry a man who couldn't stand a drop or two.' I kept quiet, but prayed to God that India might be spared the advance in civilization represented by these sentiments.

For the next two weeks I was busy seeing everything that was of importance in Berlin. The city of the Hohenzollerns is indeed a remarkable one though it cannot be compared to London for size or Paris for beauty. Berlin has consciously

imitated Paris but has always been behind its model. This is only to be expected as Paris is largely a creation of the peculiar genius of France which is totally different from that of Germany. Still, the imitation has not been without benefit as many of the beautiful things in Berlin are its direct result. Some of the finest buildings in the city are the palaces of the Emperor William I, the Ex-Kaiser and the Ex-Crown Prince, the Chancellor's residence, the Imperial Diet, the University, the Polytechnic Institute, the Academy of Arts and Music, the Royal Theatre and Opera, the Berlin Museum, the National Gallery, the new Town Hall, the royal mausoleum, the Emperor William Memorial Church, the Cathedral, the Church of St. Hedwiga, the Market, the Brandenburg Museum, the Emperor Frederick Museum, and the arsenal. The palaces of Berlin are stately and comfortable buildings but nothing comparable in beauty or splendour to Versailles or Fontainebleau or even the Tuileries. This is perhaps natural when we remember the poverty of Prussia and the late rise of the German Empire.

The University is a most progressive one and yields to no other in the quality of its professors and its contribution to knowledge. When I was visiting the University, an elderly gentleman approached me and, after ascertaining that I was an Indian, requested me to explain a certain

passage in the Isopanishad of which he had a copy in his hand. I told him that I knew no Sanskrit and so could not comply with his request. 'Perhaps, you are a Muslim or Christian' said he. 'No, I am a Hindu' I replied. 'Then perhaps you belong to those castes which are prohibited from reading the Vedas,' said he. 'Oh, no, I am a Brahmin' said I. 'A Brahmin, and not know the Vedas! Impossible. I know the real reason. You are unwilling to explain the sacred scriptures to a Non-Hindu like me,' said he. I assured him that he was mistaken and that I, like millions of Brahmins, did not know any Sanskrit. 'What a tragedy!' said he, 'Young man, continue not in this ignorance of your sacred lore. Even now it is not too late to begin.' It was this admonition of a Non-Hindu which made me study Sanskrit seriously in my leisure moments and be able to read and understand the Bhagavad-Gita which has been a constant solace to me ever after. It is remarkable that there is provision for the study of Sanskrit in every University in Germany unlike in England where even Oxford and Cambridge started it only recently. One powerful aid to research in Germany is the enlightened selfishness of the manufacturers which makes them employ research workers who advance the cause of knowledge while at the same time making some important discoveries in applied chemistry to the profit of their employers. This is

an unheard-of thing in India where big merchants are content to import the manufactures of other countries. It is absolutely certain that till Indian commercial magnates follow the German example neither research work nor manufactures will make much headway in this unfortunate country.

The Polytechnic School impressed me even more than the University. Tears came into my eyes when I saw the splendid provision made for technical education there as contrasted with the paucity of such provision in my own presidency of Madras which is more populous than Prussia of whose many institutions that at Berlin was only one. When I saw the Polytechnic Institute and the Royal Theatre and Opera House, I regretted that the State in India had not gone in largely for such activities. We in India are born in the tradition that the State can and should take part in all such things. No Indian will ever see anything objectionable or undesirable in the State taking over and managing the railways, theatres, schools, etc. To our misfortune the peculiar English doctrine of *laissez faire* and the sacred right of individuals to compete in such things with the State has been applied to this country. Since England herself has been forced to abandon this doctrine along with the connected doctrine of Free Trade, we shall soon see the State in India rivalling Germany in such beneficent activities. Another thing which made me sad in Germany was the rapid

rise of Germany as an industrial nation of the first rank, while India was still lagging far behind despite her enormous superiority in raw materials and cheap labour. I was pleased to see in Germany all people literate, and a considerable proportion distinctly educated and cultured. Here again, the mind could not help wandering back to India and feeling sorry for her deplorable state.

A professor at the Academy of Arts and Music said to me, 'The Indian and the German are the only two independent systems of music in the world. All the remaining systems are permutations and combinations of these.' I felt flattered and heartily agreed with him. What was my horror, however, when he asked to give a sample of some ragas! I had to confess my utter ignorance and beat a precipitate retreat. The professor's parting words 'Evidently, Indians are neglecting those ancestral arts and sciences of which they have every right to be proud. When all these are forgotten, how can Indians hold their heads erect before the world?' rang in my ears as I hurried down the streets.

The three museums and the national gallery were of absorbing interest. Some of the most celebrated sculptures and paintings of the world are in the Berlin museum and the national gallery. Besides these places I visited also a medical museum where all diseases and abnormalities were vividly shown in models made of Plaster of Paris.

It is greatly to be desired that in every presidency in India there should be such a museum. The educative value of these museums cannot be exaggerated. In all of them simple directions should be given at the bottom of every disease showing its causes and the ways of prevention and cure. In the one I saw at Berlin there was a small fee for visitors in order to cover the maintenance charges, and children below sixteen were not being admitted. These rules also can with advantage be copied in India.

Undoubtedly the most beautiful avenue in Berlin is the Unterden Linden with the famous Brandenburg Gate. Another pleasant walk is the Victory Avenue with the statue of Emperor William I, called by the Germans William the Great. Some squares like Wilhelm Platz, Nollendorf Platz, Potsdamer Platz, and Belle-Alliance Platz are also impressive. The Roland fountain, the Hubertus fountain and the waterfall in Victoria Park are worth visiting though nothing wonderful. Berlin has a great many handsome statues. The principal are those of Luther, the Great Elector, Frederick the Great, the Emperor William I, Frederick-William III, Queen Louise, Frederick III, Bismarck, Moltke, Roon, Goethe, Wagner, Lessing and Schiller. The Hohenzollerns are still popular in Germany with all classes though the Republic has also its own adherents who are slowly

but steadily increasing in number. The column of Victory was being largely resorted to when I was there. Photos of the imperial family were in demand even among the working classes. There was, of course, little craze for the Kaiser among the Socialists. After I visited the Ex-Kaiser's palace, which was freely open to the public, I pointed out to Herr N. how Herr Ebert, the President of the Republic, had no soldiers guarding his palace whereas the Ex-Kaiser had twelve. 'Who in all Germany will think it worth while to kill him,' he asked, 'especially when other mechanics can replace him at a moment's notice?' Such was the average German monarchist's contempt for people of humble origin.

All the time I was in Berlin the mark was falling rapidly. It was 10,000 to the pound when I went; the next day it was 11,000; two days later, it was 12,000; in ten days more it was 13,000; and there it stood till I left Germany. I at first suffered some loss by having changed fifty pounds at 10,000 on the exchanger's assuring me that there would be a rapid rise thereafter. I discovered too late that it was a ruse played by the cunning fellow to induce me to change more pound notes than I had intended. Things were cheap in Germany owing to the abnormal fall of the mark and the favourable exchange I enjoyed by the rise of the Rupee. I bought an excellent Ika Tropical Camera for less than half its price in England.

From Berlin I went to Leipzig and thence to Dresden. At Leipzig the noteworthy buildings are the Federal Court, the University, the new Town Hall, the Railway Station, and the monument erected to commemorate the victory at Leipzig in 1813. The last is an elaborate thing with many impressive sculptures and is quite worthy of the great battle. Augustusplatz with the theatre, university and other noble structures presents a good appearance. Konigsplatz too is a fine square. At Leipzig I wanted to attend a musical performance, but gave up the idea on the ticket-seller's demanding eight times the usual fare instead of five times as at Berlin. I may mention here that at the time of my visit to Germany British subjects were popular in Prussia, neither popular nor unpopular in Saxony, and very unpopular in Bavaria. Indeed, there was much difficulty in getting visas to go to Munich; and those few Indians who got them found it impossible to stay long owing to mob violence. A friend of mine had to be rescued from the insulting jeers and possible violence of the mob by a Roman Catholic missionary who was once in India. This Indian told me that the Bavarians used to tell him, 'You ruined us during the war by fighting against us; we shall not allow you to ruin us during the peace by eating up our substance and buying the best things in Germany at ridiculously low prices, taking advantage of the iniquitous exchange.'

Dresden is a more beautiful town than either Berlin or Leipzig and is the capital of Saxony. As soon as I had put my things in a hotel and taken my lunch, I rushed to the world-renowned picture gallery and feasted my eyes on the famous paintings there. In the night I went to the equally celebrated Opera House, and, after paying eight times the usual fare, witnessed the very best opera that I have ever seen. The next day I saw some rare pieces of Dresden china and bought some. The delicate beauty of these is something unique.

That night when I was walking along the brilliantly lighted streets I heard a chorus of voices cry 'Hullo, Ayyar!' and turning round saw four Bengali friends from England. They forced me to go to their hotel and sit with them far into the night sipping coffee and talking of India and things Indian. 'I dream of a day when the least of our district headquarters will be equal to Dresden in beauty,' said one. 'It is an ambitious dream and altogether impossible of realization' said I. 'Is anything impossible for a united and free India?' he asked with sudden warmth. 'Nothing' replied the rest of us, all together.

After I had finished Dresden I returned to Berlin and spent a few more days there, seeing Potsdam, Brandenburg and other surrounding places. Potsdam is a lovely place without, however, any of the surpassing beauty of

Versailles. I was struck by the utter commonplaceness of Brandenburg, the place where centuries ago the hard-headed Great Elector laid the foundations of the greatness of Prussia. Poor Brandenburg, it did not even give its name to the glorious structure it helped to build. At the time of my visit to Germany there was great bitterness between the Monarchists and Republicans and especially the Socialists. Brandenburg was, needless to say, staunchly monarchist. Brandenburgers would never admit either Germany's war-guilt or the superiority of the Republic over the Empire. 'None but a fool will say that a single nation was responsible for the late war. Of course, it is the easiest thing in the world to lay the war-guilt at the door of the vanquished; and there this scapegoat responsibility will remain till the vanquished is strong enough to defeat his former vanquisher and thus convince the virtuous historian that the real cause of both the wars is the most recently defeated party' said an indignant lady to me. 'The pity is that some of our own countrymen, those damned Bolsheviks miscalled Socialists, should be eager to plead guilty to this monstrous charge. They are the most unpatriotic curs that I have ever seen' she added. And yet I doubt whether any people were so docile in times of revolution as the German Socialists she so vehemently condemned. In fact, so determined

were the Socialists not to give trouble to the infant Republic that they put up with many insults and indignities from the Monarchists rather than start another revolution and open the flood-gates of Bolshevism. One day I was talking with a labourer belonging to the Left, and he told me 'After all, Germany is our country too. Will we bring about our own ruin by dragging our Fatherland into the mire? What reforms we want we shall get by the approved constitutional methods. Of course, there are wild men among us as among all parties. The only thing is that we condemn the Junkers for bringing about this ruinous war, and they do not like it.' 'Would you have condemned them if they had won?' I asked. 'Certainly not' said he, 'if a speculation succeeds, all applaud; if it fails, all condemn. That is the way of the world, and I follow it.' Those were days when the German poorer classes suffered many hardships. I found a group of ragged children with rickety bones in one of the slums. Owing to the depreciation of the mark many people who were well-to-do before the war were reduced to beggary. A person who had 80,000 marks was a rich man in pre-war days; but when the mark came to 13,000 per pound he was among the poorest. I pitied the professors and other middle class gentry who had become paupers like this. I pitied even more the poor peasants and labourers who were duped of

their hard-earned money by this iniquitous freak of the exchange. To add to the havoc wrought by this mysterious demon, I was told that the Republic also went on printing currency notes night and day and inflicting them on a world already surfeited with them. The mother-in-law of Herr N. told me 'Currency-note printing is the most thriving industry of Germany now; soon, the cost of the paper and printing will exceed the value of the notes, and then the accursed thing will have to stop.'

A week after my return to Berlin I took the train for Calais. At the frontier of unoccupied Germany there was the German customs examination. I had no difficulty at all. Indeed, the German officer was very cordial and did not even ransack my goods. With French subjects he was reputed to be severe. In those days an export certificate costing in many cases more than the article itself had to be got and produced at the frontier for all new articles. So it was that I had written my name on the new articles I had purchased and had also begun to use them. New articles without the certificates were liable to be forfeited at the frontier and very generally were so confiscated. A certain unfortunate Bengali gentleman whose Mongoloid look and excellent French caused him to be suspected to be an Annamese had his new camera confiscated as he had no certificate. A sturdy brown Mahratta who could be recognized

at a glance as an Indian escaped scot-free though he was in the same predicament. On reaching Calais I took the earliest boat to London and from there the first non-stop train to Oxford. To my landlady's query 'How are the Germans?', I replied, 'Very much like the British,' an answer which astonished and slightly irritated her but was none the less true.

CHAPTER XII.

Home Again.

THREE days after my return to Oxford the results of the I.C.S. Final Examination were announced; they were not awaited in anxiety by anybody as usually everyone takes care to study enough to pass and consequently failures are almost unknown. Their only importance was that as soon as they were published preparations for returning home could be begun in dead earnest. The moment I had finished reading them I began packing. The longing to return to the land of my birth possessed me. England and things English seemed to have an air of unreality like the railway stations a passenger passes on the way to his destination. 'Soon, very soon, I shall be in the land of the burning sun, pouring rain and naked babies', I said to my landlady. 'And England with its dense fogs, puny showers and drilled children will become a faded memory.' 'Will you like the change?' she asked. 'As well as a cobra likes milk' I replied. 'You prefer your savagery to our wisdom?' she queried. 'I do, I do,' said I, 'and I hope every Indian worth his salt does.' In a few days there was the inevitable medical examination with its toll of two guineas. Then, on the thirty-first of October, I signed the covenant at the India Office. Nothing more remained except to book my

passage. The authorities informed me that as no berths were available by earlier boats they had booked my passage by a steamer sailing on the 17th November from London. I told them that passages by earlier boats could be secured if earnest efforts were made, and wrung from them a promise to pay for a first class by an earlier boat if I succeeded in securing one. As luck would have it, just as I stepped into Cook's the people there had received intimation of the cancellation of three first class passages which had been provisionally booked by the Caledonia which was to sail from London on the 10th. I at once got a lower berth booked for myself; and two friends cornered the other berths. I resolved to sail from London so that I might see the Bay of Biscay and Gibraltar.

On the 10th, when I boarded the steamer at London, my mood was just the opposite of the one which had possessed me at Bombay when I boarded the Nellore. I had been full of anxiety then; I was free from all care now. Instead of brooding melancholy, my face shone with mirth. Two friends who had come to see me off and who were destined to sail only on the seventeenth looked sad when they saw me departing, leaving them to vegetate in England for seven days more, and I heartily sympathized with them in their misery. It was not without a certain regret, however, that I saw even the shores of England fading away on the horizon.

I felt the kind of regret that we feel on finishing a good novel; a desire to read it again after some time. I determined to revisit the country later in life.

The journey home was not exciting. The Bay of Biscay was very calm despite my expectations; off Brest there was a breeze, but it never developed to anything more; and the ship reached Gibraltar without even a squall. Gibraltar presented a picturesque appearance from the sea. I landed and had a look round the tiny colony. The signal station, the Admiralty pier, the moorish market, the harbour, Rosia Bay, Catalan Bay, the Spanish Lines, Europa pass, and the barracks, were all interesting in their own way. The view from the south looking across the Mediterranean to Ceuta in Africa is specially impressive. The African coast-line was clearly visible. Wellington's monument with the statue of the great soldier and two big guns below is also worth seeing. I found a number of Sindhi curio-dealers in this place. How they prosper on this rock is a mystery; but that they do prosper is clear enough. Indeed, it was said that they throve so well that the administration restricted their shops to twelve. One of them insisted on giving me tea 'in memory of Bharat' as he said. He had his wife with him and it was wonderful to see this lady living alone, a sareed island in a sea of gowns. I wondered how curios could be so

numerous as to be sold by a score of shops day in and day out. I suppose when the stock is exhausted other articles are got or *made*.

The next port of call was Marseilles. Here the ship anchored for two days, awaiting the overland passengers. I spent the time profitably in seeing the great colonial exhibition which was going on then. All the colonies of France were represented worthily. Algeria, Tunis, Morocco, Equatorial Africa, West Africa, Indo-China, the self-governing colonies, and Madagascar, had their own splendid palaces ; and each of these palaces contained all things for which the country was celebrated, cultural as well as commercial. It was an imposing display of the colonial splendour of France and the immense potentialities of these colonies. Each palace was in the best architecture of the colony concerned, and the characteristic products of that colony were being sold by its natives some of whom were in their picturesque native dress. Hence, an outsider could get a vivid impression of life in those distant lands. An infinite and delightful variety was also ensured by this arrangement. I was impressed considerably by all the palaces, but the thing which gripped me most was the Indo-Chinese palace with an exquisite model of the famous temple of Angkor. When I saw this fairy-like shrine with its four towers and graceful body and the blue lake in front of it, memories of the days

when Indians went across the black waters carrying their arts and religion to savages in far-off lands and so elevated these uncivilized races that they became highly cultured and raised monuments of architecture surpassing the best products of the home-land came to me and I wondered how India had fallen so low and why that unquenchable spirit of adventure which coursed in the veins of our ancestors did not descend to us. The sight of the Cambodians who were inside the palace selling small fancy things created in me the feeling of having rediscovered a long-lost brother. Strange to say, the Cambodian young man selling little ivory elephants reciprocated my feelings. I bought an elephant from him for the extraordinarily cheap price of two francs. He would not take the money, saying that it was a gift from a Kambhojan brother in memory of the golden services rendered to his country in days of old by Bharatavarsha and that therefore he must be permitted to pay for me. 'I shall accept the gift when Bharatavarsha remembers Kambhoja again' said I. 'Now I feel ashamed. The Bharatas have forgotten their brothers across the seas; and it is to the efforts of a foreigner that we owe even this meeting.' 'True;' said he, 'lashed by the waves of the struggle for existence, our boats, which were hooked, have drifted apart, and both of us have suffered untold misery. May the Tathagatha will our unity and happiness again!'

'Amen!' said I. 'We are a dying race' said he. 'Come to our aid before we die. The Khmers count on you.' I was deeply moved, and as I walked away, cursed my university which had taught me a lot about Greek colonies which have disappeared long since and not a word about our own still living Hindu colonies of Kambhoja, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Champa, Siam and Bali. The Annamese present in the pavilion were Mongoloid in appearance and quite different from the almost Indian-looking Cambodians. They were very merry and had none of the typically Indian melancholy expression about them. Still, even their fancy goods clearly showed traces of Indian influence. 'Do you know that your country was in days of old the Indian colony of Champa?' I asked one of them. 'Yes', he replied, 'the degraded Chams are the descendants of those colonists and not we. We are conquerors in the land just like the French.' I saw from this that French Indo-China had its own racial animosities, and was about to move away when the Annamese said 'Sir, don't be offended. We admire the Indians. They are a great race. The Chams do not really represent them. Was not the Tathagatha born in your country, and could any but the most civilized race have produced him?' I felt flattered and at the same time realized how great was India's debt to the Buddha and what a loss internationally we suffered when we expelled Buddhism

from our shores. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons why India lost all touch with Burma, Siam, Cambodia, Annam, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Bali, China and Japan in mediæval times was that she had by her expulsion of Buddhism severed the golden chain which had united her to those countries. It was a terrible price we paid for the triumph of New Hinduism. I have treasured that little ivory elephant I bought that day as a sacred reminder of my brethren across the seas and have resolved one day to make a pilgrimage to the temple of Angkor and the lovely land of Kambhoja.

The Grand Palais, the palace of the minister of colonies, the palace of Marseilles and Provence, the central avenue, the entrance, the fountains, and the great tower of West Africa, measuring 65 metres in height, were other noteworthy things to be seen at the exhibition. To be sure, the exhibition must have cost a great deal; but it was a case of money well-spent, and I believe the collections must have paid for all the expenses and left a decent margin. When will India have her colonial exhibition? The fact that she has no dependencies need not stand in her way as all her former colonies are sure to respond to an invitation on an equal footing.

The ship left Marseilles, and days seemed to drag on in spite of lively company on board. I took an active part in all the ship games simply in order to while away time. In one of the games

I became by lot the partner of an English lady, who was far and out the greatest expert at it, in a match which carried a handsome prize. I was sincerely sorry for her as it would mean that she would certainly lose. When I expressed my sorrow to her, she said, 'Of course, it is rotten luck for me; still, we have to take things as they come. So, please see that we do not lose at least the first round.' I was perfectly certain that our opponents, who were both good players, would easily defeat us, and I was correct. My generous partner said to me after the defeat 'We have put up a brave fight, anyhow.' A cheerful mind always sees the rosy side of life.

There was an elderly Indian gentleman with us who professed to believe that India should not be loved by Indians any more than other countries and was a strenuous opponent of protection. In spite of these opinions he was popular with the other Indians as we believed that he did not really mean all that he said. We were proved to be right in this when we saw that the first man who yearningly looked at the distant shores of the motherland through a pair of powerful glasses was he. Indeed, he would not lend the glasses to us for a long time despite our earnest entreaties. When I pointed out to him the inconsistencies between his professions and practice, he laughed and asked 'And did you really believe that I was so depraved as all that? We get attached even to the ship in which we travel

for a few days. How much more so to a land where we were born and where the major portion of our life is spent? Only, I want that love to be pure and not sullied by hatred of others.' 'Just like the love for one's mother which does not prevent the love for one's wife or brother or sister or neighbour, is it?' I asked. 'You have got it correct' said he.

This gentleman told us that the worst cheats were the Egyptians who came on board at Port Said selling picture post-cards and assured me that I would most certainly be cheated by them. I told him that his predictions were sure to go wrong. When we reached Port Said, I was careful to bargain to the utmost for three illustrated booklets depicting scenes of Cairo and Port Said and Egypt in general. I saw a man buying them at a shilling each and succeeded after infinite higgling in getting them for nine pence each. I rushed to my friend with the enthusiasm of a school-boy and showed him my trophies. 'But I got them for six pence each' said he showing three similar booklets. 'So in two minutes he has sold at two different prices.' 'Three', said I, 'for I saw a gentleman purchase them at a shilling each.' 'He was no gentleman at all but a decoy to make you buy', replied my friend, and to my infinite chagrin I found that he was right. 'You might have fared worse' said my friend encouragingly, 'I have seen many older men buy at the decoy's price.' I got down at Port Said and

adventured alone. I bought some curios at a Sindhi's shop. With my eyes fully opened, I did not present much of a target to the Sindhi and finally bought the articles for half the price offered by another. After the purchase was over, the Sindhi invited me to tea. 'What!' said I, 'you would not forego a penny more profit just now. Why do you want to lose a shilling now?' 'That was business; this is pleasure. Come along,' and he led me to the adjacent room and gave me a sumptuous tea. On my return to the ship, my elderly friend told me, as I expected, that I had been cheated of a shilling. 'Ah, but I got a tea worth eighteen pence free' said I. 'Oh, you are improving beyond recognition', said he, 'I must also make good the loss of nine pence I caused you by not warning you. Come and have a lemonade at my expense,' and I accepted the reparation thus offered after protesting that a lemonade cost only six pence.

At Aden I alighted and went and saw the famous tanks. I also sent a wire to my brother at Bombay. Days now seemed to linger like unwanted and unpropitiated Indian beggars. But at last one morning our elderly friend shouted out 'Hullo, your precious motherland is in sight.' After great difficulty I managed to snatch the glasses from him and have a glance at the faint brown line with a small ridge above and three dots

below, the last being, of course, the islands of Salsette, Bassein and Elephanta, and the ridge the Western Ghats. Wild ecstasy prevailed among the Indians. Only an exile can know the joy felt at returning to the motherland. Poets can rhetorically ask where the true man's fatherland is and reply that it is the whole world or universe; but this is as absurd as Plato's plan of claiming all babies as sons and all old men as fathers. As Aristotle wisely remarked, one would prefer to be the real tenth cousin of a man than his son after Plato's fashion. So too, a man will certainly prefer to have even the Sahara as his fatherland than claim the whole world or universe as his mongrel fatherland. Think of enthusing over Mars or Canopus or Antarctica and writing patriotic odes and sonnets to them! Of course, I do not say that nationalism or patriotism should be made a fetish or religion as some persons would have us do. It should be just like the love for one's mother, not excluding other loves and in fact ennobling other loves.

Soon, Alexandra docks and the Taj Mahal Hotel were in sight. The gateway of India had not been put up then. An hour later, my foot was treading the sacred soil of my motherland, and a prayer of sincere thanksgiving went up spontaneously from my heart to the One in the All and the All in the One who had safely brought me back to

the land of my ancestors. So eager was I to land that I fought for precedence in passport-checking and customs examination and finally succeeded in landing first. Indeed, such was my haste that I missed my brothers, who had come to meet me, and rushed with all my things in a taxi to their residence. There was wild rejoicing at this meeting after three years of separation. In two days I left for my native place. I flew to see my wife. After the first rapturous greetings were over, she said 'Dearest, it must have been horrible for you to have remained in that dreadful country so long. Are you not glad to be back again, glad that the terrible nightmare is over?' 'It was no nightmare at all but a most delightful sojourn in a delightful country;' I replied, 'of course, I am glad to be back in my own native land and see my beloved ones. One day, I may revisit dear England with my beloved.' Her eyes shone with pleasure, and she asked 'So you love England?' 'Yes, next to our own motherland' said I, and meant it.

CHAPTER XIII.

The English Family and the Indian.

ONE of the most important institutions of mankind is the family. Nothing is so striking or instructive as the differences between the Indian family and the English. They are not merely superficial but go to the very root.

The Indian family is at once more extensive and intensive. The definition in the Madras T. A. Rules of a family as 'husband, wife and children' has roused the wonder and indignation of pious Hindus, but is an exact description of a typical English family. The average Indian stands aghast at a definition which excludes the father and mother, let alone brothers, sisters and cousins. I dare say that the average Englishman will be equally aghast at a system which includes in the family a multiplicity of members running up to adopted sons and third cousins in many instances. To the Indian the English family is a miserable and selfish mutilation of a noble institution ; to the Englishman the Indian family is a huge crowd miscalled a family and really a clan. So too, the intensity of feeling which binds a member to another is far stronger in the Indian than in the English family. English parents spend much less time with their children than Indians. The bond between brothers, sisters and cousins also

is infinitely stronger in India. In this country thousands look after their widowed sisters, brothers' sons, etc., in a way which is inconceivable in England. Even the bond, but not necessarily the love, between husband and wife is stronger as in most cases divorces are impossible and night clubs are unknown and so they have perforce to spend more time together and have fewer chances of escape from each other. Again, the authority of a father or mother in India is far greater than in England. Most of the marriages of the sons and all the marriages of the daughters are arranged by their parents. In a few cases mothers have even compelled their sons to contract a second marriage either owing to the lack of male issue by the first wife or to their dislike of the unfortunate woman. Such things will be unthinkable in England.

Indians claim for their joint family system several unique advantages like the support of poor relations, the creation of a spirit of equality among large bodies of people, the promotion of commerce, industry and agriculture by the joint utilization of the resources of many, and the protection afforded in times of danger. Most of these advantages are mythical, and, where they do exist, will exist in even greater measure if other suitable institutions were substituted for the joint family. The support of poor relations like widowed sisters, orphan nephews and the like is no doubt widely found. But in

many cases, it is fear of social condemnation which is the cause of such support and not pure love or humanitarian considerations. Then, too, it must never be forgotten that the widowed sister is a very great help to the family. She drudges, and is made to drudge, for the family. She sweeps the house, milks the cows, looks after the numerous children, attends to the frequent confinement cases, cooks for the multitudinous members of the family and the hosts of guests, invited and uninvited, and does odd unpleasant jobs like making cowdung cakes for the oven. And for all this she gets nothing more than her bare meals and a few cheap clothes. I don't think much credit can be claimed for maintaining widowed sisters though certainly many families are put to hardship in having an additional member where there is hardly enough food to go round even among the existing members. Sometimes the family borrows for celebrating the marriages of such sisters' daughters, and then we can hardly withhold admiration for this splendid though misplaced self-sacrifice. My whole point is that widowed sisters can be maintained even without the joint family and then the sacrifice, being voluntary, will be appreciated more not only by such sisters but also by God. The same remark applies to the maintenance of poor brothers, nephews and cousins. At present the earning brother in a joint family toils and moils not for the benefit of himself, wife and children but for

a whole crowd of brothers, cousins, nephews, nieces and lesser relations as well, who will thanklessly swallow the major portion of his earnings and then blame him for a real or supposed favoured treatment he accorded to his wife or children. And, strangely enough, the village will support these ungrateful people. We cannot blame anybody for this curious phenomenon as according to the theory of the joint family the earning brother is bound to feed the whole crowd impartially. It may be argued that such an ideal is higher. I disagree. Such god-like men are not yet born. Again, even if they were evolved, they will be no compensation for the degradation of the crowds of ungrateful parasites generated by the system. In my family, we effected a partition long ago, but that has not prevented us from helping one another; and whenever such help has been rendered it has been thankfully acknowledged instead of being accepted as a matter of course and as less than what was really due.

The boasted spirit of equality and impartiality among the members of a joint family simply does not exist in the majority of such families. Each mother accords preferential treatment on the sly to her children, and this slowly works up to a crisis when all the mothers fight and force their husbands to effect partitions and start joint families of their own. The petty meannesses which take place in a

joint family are beyond count; and elderly males, who ought to know better, can often be found to engage themselves in silly quarrels of which children in other countries will be ashamed.

As regards the fostering of commerce, industry and agriculture, it is obvious that an intelligent co-operative system will achieve the same thing in a much better way. Such combined capital will not be endangered by external considerations like family quarrels between ignorant females. The management of the concerns too will be much better as all the shareholders will take an interest in them and not merely the family manager. Needless to say, misappropriation by the manager will be more difficult than now. So too, the additional protection afforded by the joint family is unnecessary in these days of advanced security.

While the joint family has at present few advantages, it has quite a crop of peculiar evils of its own. Quarrels between joint families tend to develop into riots as all the members of the joint family take up the family quarrels as theirs and assemble in great force at the disputed field or temple. Again, the constant intrigues and bickerings inside the family take away a valuable portion of the time of the members and also lead them to seek the intervention of a particularly low and unscrupulous set of creatures who, under the pretence of arbitrating, knock away much money from their dupes and

cunningly manufacture more disputes. Then, too, some children are taught to steal eatables and also to stealthily get better meals and sweetmeats than the remaining children of the family. An exchange of words among the women is also a frequent occurrence, and children too often take part in this mud-slinging. Thus the nature of women and children is coarsened, and many evil habits are implanted which may not always disappear in later years. Further, since the earnings of a man are not to be enjoyed solely by him but are to be shared with idle relatives of various kinds, the incentive to work to the utmost receives a serious check. Lastly, the fear of the malicious criticisms of a host of relatives makes a man a coward and has also a visible injurious effect even on the nerves of those who do not become cowards. Every Hindu's ordinary expectation from his relations is merely that they may not pursue him with their lying slanders and envious bad wishes. It may be that the joint family was a very necessary and useful institution in former days; but now it is as old and decrepit as a twenty-year old cow and much more of a drain on the nation's resources than that. So it is that it is slowly dying and is being replaced by a family corresponding more closely to the British type. It will be a real service to the country if we were to consciously bring about this reform instead of allowing it to come about unconsciously; for then

we can get the exact form of family we want instead of being made to carry on with the one we get. Man in the upper grades of civilization always tries to get what he wants in the form he wants it. Thus where less advanced races are content to use water for irrigation only where it is readily available, more advanced nations make water available where they want it.

Doubtless, many young Indian wives will be anxious to know the position of the mother-in-law in England. They may be somewhat surprised when they hear that the mother-in-law who causes trouble and misery in an English family is not the husband's mother as in India but the wife's mother! That is why a mother-in-law's death is a joyous event for an English husband as for many Indian wives. The predominant partner in an English family being usually the wife, it is her mother, sisters and brothers who honour the family with their frequent visits if not permanent residence. In India the predominant partner being usually the husband, it is his mother, brothers and sisters who crowd the family. It must not be, however, imagined that the wife's mother oppresses the husband in England to anything like the same degree as the husband's mother oppresses the wife in India. The cases of oppression are far fewer and of an entirely different kind, causing in most cases merely mental worry. In India, of course, it is far from unusual

for a mother-in-law to beat, brand or starve a daughter-in-law and to get her cast off or superseded by another. These miserable women have been in their own days oppressed by their own mothers-in-law, but, like convict warders and freed slaves, their sufferings only make them eager to make others suffer even more. Truly, only free men can realize the dignity of liberty and the nobility of treating others better than they were treated themselves. The mother-in-law's oppressions in India are steadily becoming less and less and are bound to disappear soon. Even the counter-campaign of the oppression of the mother-in-law by the daughter-in-law has begun in some quarters. Still, while the mother-in-law's oppressions in England are more or less a joke, in India they are a dreadful reality. Every movement of the newly-married bride, even her conjugal relations with her husband, is regulated by the hag, who is a steady enemy of her daughter-in-law's learning singing or reading books or sitting and chatting with her husband or attending innocent entertainments. She kills all the joy of youth and blights the young woman's life. It is largely because of difference in age and lack of education and not of set villainy that she does this. The latter cause alone may be removed. Since the former will still persist it is highly necessary for the happiness of the newly-married couple that they should have a

separate home where only they and their children will live. The parents of the husband as well as of the wife will, of course, visit them often as they do in England, and, having no authority, are sure to behave well. To Hindu husbands who say that they cannot live apart from their parents, I shall only reply that the same argument will apply to the wife's parents also if her feelings too are consulted and that it is best for all concerned that husband and wife should form a separate unit with their children. No unpleasant necessity will then arise for the husband to sacrifice his mother or wife as he does now in quarrels between the two. I must emphasize that this separate living need not and should not prevent him from rendering pecuniary or other help to his or his wife's parents whenever necessary and possible. I am sure that then our young wives will embrace and extol their mothers-in-law instead of wishing their death as they do now in many cases. Of course, by the arrangement I suggest our wives will lose the invaluable service rendered by their mothers-in-law as midwives and in looking after the children most of whom love their grandmother more than their mother. But nothing good is got in this world without some sacrifice; and the wife who aspires to be free must be able and willing to shoulder her burdens herself like all free men.

A thing which amused me very much at first in England was the clear-cut distinction between a

husband's possessions and a wife's even among loving couples. 'The clock is mine; the stand is my husband's,' said a lady to me. 'That cupboard and these two chairs are mine; the remaining furniture in this room is his.' 'Why do you differentiate between your things and your husband's?' I asked in surprise. 'What nonsense! Why shouldn't I? If he dies, I must carry my things away. Surely, I am not going to allow them to be included in his testate or intestate property!' said she. 'We in India have no such distinctions' said I loftily. 'That is because you swallow your wives' property. What property have they, poor things! But wait till we get at them, and I bet you will have all these distinctions and more' was her crushing retort. Indeed, behind our pseudo-spiritual unity of property there is clearly discernible the male's monopoly. He freely and shamelessly uses his wife's money which he calls 'our money' and thus escapes even a sense of obligation, whereas if the poor lady were to utilize his earnings even to buy flowers without his permission he is all ablaze with anger at the 'theft' of 'his' money, and will, in all probability, beat her. Wife-beating is still a practice far from uncommon in our country though in England it is as rare now as husband-beating. There are not wanting some university men in this country to-day who try to justify this degraded practice with the zeal of a mediæval clergyman. Needless to say,

there are very few Hindus who ever allow their wives to have any separate property. Of course, there is 'Stridhan' which is supposed to be the wife's separate property, but this can be used by the husband even without her consent in times of danger and for charitable and family purposes, and in any case can be extorted from her by undue influence or coercion by threatening to desert her or remarry or commit suicide. I have known a husband who forced his wife to sell a Stridhan jewel in order to satisfy a fraudulent promissory note executed by him in favour of his concubine. However, in the best type of Hindu family we find a delightful merging together of the property of husband and wife which is never found in England. The English practice is on the whole more advantageous to women and also leads to some pretty customs like husbands and wives giving presents to one another at Christmas and other times. In India this custom is absent as the wife has no separate property in reality, whatever may be the theory, and even the husband, after his robbery, has not got the cheek to call his purchases for her 'presents'! The custom is as delightful as the English customs of thanking husbands and wives for small services done and calling one another by names or by endearing epithets. In India husbands and wives rarely call one another by names in public though recently some husbands have begun to do so. Ladies have

not yet started the practice. Usually, the husband calls his wife by some such expressions as 'Oh woman' or, more often, 'Here'. These expressions are no more indications of roughness than the English expressions are of love. An Englishman may mechanically say 'Dearest, I have instructed my lawyer to apply for a divorce' just as an Indian may say in the same way 'Oh woman, my heart overflows with delight at this meeting after our long separation.' Still, there is no doubt that the English expressions are more graceful.

There is a growing feeling in England that the family is a worn-out institution which will disappear in a few decades. In fact, the break-up of the family has already proceeded to some extent in England though not to the same extent as in America. Thus, many husbands and wives spend their nights at separate night clubs, divorces are comparatively easy to get, there are understandings about the number of children to result from the marriage and the time of their advent into the world in a great many up-to-date marriages, and many families regularly take their meals in the hotels and restaurants owing to the refusal of wives to do the cooking. Many married women too have their own jobs to which they attend, leaving the children in the charge of governesses or maid-servants. Decidedly, in modern England the family is of less importance than society. In other words, the family, which is

our centre, falls only on the Englishman's circumference; and society, which is on our circumference, is his centre. Marriage itself is being attacked by some great scholars. It is absolutely out of the question for us to follow England here though unless we look sharp some of our ultra-Anglicized sisters, posing to represent the vast masses of India's women, may try the experiment of aping, here as elsewhere. It is a wonder to me why England should imitate America in the attacks on the venerable institutions of marriage and family. America is a new nation with no immemorial tradition of these old institutions and consequently dislikes to follow them and burns with a desire to originate something and make the world adopt it. Hence marmonism and marriages of convenience dissoluble at will and other freaks. I am confident that in the end these absurdities will prove a thorough failure, but, alas, not before plunging the world in misery.

There is a mistaken impression in England that Indian women are slaves without any influence at home. Any man who knows Indian homes will see the absurdity of this belief. I doubt whether there is any country in the world where women have more real influence in the home than in India. Most decisions affecting the home are arrived at by women though when they go out they do so under the signature of the male. Our women keep their

own names unlike the English who have throughout their life to merge their names in those of their husbands or fathers. Just at the time when some English women are beginning to call themselves by their own names our women radicals are, with that blunderbuss instinct never failing Indians in such matters, calling themselves by their husbands' and fathers' names and producing some monstrosities at which even devils will weep. I do not pretend that our women are as free as Englishwomen. Nor do I consider such freedom necessary or even desirable in India. I have no doubt that except for a few odd instances dancing and night-club haunting will never become popular among respectable women in this land. Each culture has its peculiar features which can never be imitated by a totally different culture without disastrous consequences of the first magnitude. A certain ultra-radical Hindu lady of brilliant parts and optimistic temperament told me one day, 'Mr. Ayyar, we want to wake up the sleeping millions of India's women.' 'Pray, don't' said I. 'Are you afraid?' she asked. 'Yes, not for myself but for you' I replied. 'These millions of orthodox, fanatically conservative women, if woke up, will surely swallow you up in a fury of indignation at your ways, which they will consider highly immodest, and India will lose some of her charming daughters.' She took a hurried leave and has never reopened the topic to me. The need to educate our women is

imperative so that the tremendous influence which they exercise in our homes may be guided by wisdom instead of by ignorance as very often at present. It is a question of educating our masters. The more aggressively and contemptuously an Indian talks of women the more certain I feel that he is denied all liberty at home. An elderly friend of mine was in public a most virulent enemy of women's rights and used to pretend that there was no case where a self-respecting man need or should consult a woman. Knowing his wife as a woman of strong will I could not believe my friend when he asserted that he never consulted her about anything more important than cooking. So one day when my friend had been approached for a loan on interest and had gone home ostensibly to verify whether he had the amount I quietly and unobservedly got into his house after him and saw him in a most humble manner ask his wife whether the loan could be given. I burst out into laughter, to his great confusion, and asked him 'So all your heroics end thus?' 'Let me see you behave more heroically' said he. 'I may, indeed I think I will, consult my wife' I replied, 'in everything of any importance, but, as I never preached any phillippics against women, I don't think I shall make myself ridiculous.' 'Oh, well, when all are talking big and you know it is all rot, there is a great temptation to join in and out-do the rest,' said he, 'and they

will never pay a surprise visit like you.' 'Why?' I asked. 'Because they will know that all people will consult their wives, for the peace of their homes and the goodness of the cooking, and so will not think it worth while to verify this well-known thing,' was his astonishing reply. English people, seeing that women in India are not introduced to males and do not dance or attend night clubs, rush to the conclusion that they are oppressed by the males. I do not for a moment deny that there is injustice done to women in India in some cases; but often the injustice is done for the fancied benefit of women and not for any advantage accruing to the male, and almost always the females themselves are willing parties. The purdah and early marriages are examples of such injustice.

The history of the purdah is somewhat interesting. In Ancient India the purdah was extremely rare and was confined to royal ladies on ceremonial occasions and even so was confined to a few royal houses in Northern India. When the Arabs conquered Sind, early in the eighth century, the sinister institution received a big fillip. In the sandy deserts of Arabia, delicate female eyes required the protection of thin veils in order to escape from the sand particles flying about. So the rich ladies wore veils of Dacca muslin. The poor ones, of course, could not afford this luxury and so went without it. As in all countries the poor

people are those who supply most of the concubines and prostitutes and as these were in Arabia without any veil or purdah, gradually the Arabs came to regard purdah females as respectable and those without purdah as women of easy virtue. When they conquered Sind, they found all the Hindu ladies unveiled and so regarded them as loose women and began to make improper advances. To protect themselves from this horrible danger the respectable Hindu ladies of Sind and the adjoining provinces adopted the purdah which also satisfied the jealous instincts of the males. As the Muslim conquest advanced, so did the purdah. In those provinces like Madras where the Muslims were never able to have a secure hold, the pernicious institution never exists except among rich Muslims who want to imitate their brethren in the North.

So too early marriage, while it was not unknown in Ancient India, was of very rare occurrence and became a widespread institution only after the Muslim conquest. In early days only among royal families was early marriage known and that too but rarely. The rule was for the maiden to choose her own husband at a Swayamvara. Rarely, when great political interests were at stake, politicians arranged for early marriages in the spirit of Edward I of England. When the Muslims invaded the land they had a habit of carrying away Hindu females as booty, a thing unheard of in Hindu and

Buddhist days. There was greater resentment among the Hindus if a married woman was abducted than if unmarried women were the victims, and the Muslims did not want to provoke the Hindus more than they could help and so paid their first attentions to unmarried females. The Hindus took advantage of this and began marrying off their girls at ridiculously tender years. Where the Muslims were unable to effect a permanent conquest, as in Malabar, even the Brahmins marry their girls normally only at the age of eighteen though the immigrants from the east prefer an earlier age. In provinces which were under the heel of the Muslim for centuries like Gujerat, the girls are married in some cases even before they are five years old. Alas for the Hindus, a device adopted as a war measure became in course of centuries invested with religious authority and has become one of India's major problems in these days when the State guarantees the safety of all. The curse in India is that anything old is *ipso facto* sacred and fit to be preserved. Hence the defence of such abominations as the Devadasi system, the purdah, early marriage, untouchability and enforced widowhood.

A question is sometimes asked of me by some friends as to whether conjugal affection is stronger in England or India. It is a very difficult question to answer. But I should think on the whole that the love of the husband for the wife is much the

same in both countries and that of the wife for the husband greater in India. The existence of legal monogamy in England and legal polygamy in India need not concern us very much as in reality husbands in England are not more faithful to their wives than their brothers in India. An English husband displays more chivalry towards his wife than an Indian husband, but this I attribute to the Englishmen's general chivalry towards women. There is a proverb in England that where poverty steps in at the door love walks out of the window, and the proceedings in the divorce courts tend to support this. Such a proverb will never apply to the love of the Indian woman towards her husband. The greater the poverty, the heavier the adversity, the sweeter and the stronger becomes the Indian woman's love. In prosperity an English wife will make the home more comfortable than an Indian wife; but in adversity she will be nowhere before her Indian sister. And as we in India have been plunged in adversity for centuries and are likely to continue to remain so for some generations more, we are far better off with our Indian wives than if we had married Englishwomen. It is a pity that we keep such a noble set of women for the most part uneducated and that we make the lives of a great number of them, the widows, a hell on earth. No Englishman will ordinarily eat anything without giving a part to his wife; no Indian woman

will ever eat anything without giving the major portion to her husband. Many Indian men and a few Englishwomen have not got this affectionate consideration for their partners. In a few years perhaps all these delightful differences between India and England may disappear, leaving a drab monotony behind till such time as the inhabitants of Mars or Venus come into contact with us and we can make fruitful comparisons between their husbands and wives and ours.

Early marriage as an institution must go if the nation is to prosper. But it will be a colossal mistake to imagine that no early marriage can be happy Some of the happiest marriages I know of are early marriages. The European system of love marriages is not without its flaws. Love often cools in a few months, and the erstwhile angel becomes a stupid thing escape from which is the next goal. Hence the cry for easy divorce on such classical grounds as incompatibility of temperament. Once this reform is conceded, the incompatibility which is now discovered in a few years will be discovered in a few hours after marriage, and the divorce courts will be so flooded with cases that no country can afford to keep the army of judges required for trying them and so all countries will rather abandon the institution of marriage than try these cases. The defect with early marriage is not so much that it is not a love marriage as that it is a marriage

between two physically undeveloped persons. In fact, Eugenics is ready to give love the go-by as easily as any Hindu marriage and compel a woman to wed the man whom the eugenists consider suited for her, and we are assured by many eminent men that the hope of the world lies in eugenics. Nor is the Hindu idea that the prime object of marriage is the production of children less noble than the English idea that the prime object is sexual companionship. In practice, of course, both the objects are combined in both countries, and only the emphasis differs. I grant that the Indian emphasis on children leads to the oppression of barren women and also to old men indulging in polygamy in a desperate attempt to get children and prove their manhood. But the English emphasis also is wrong and leads to children being regarded as inconvenient and unwanted by-products and also to love rapidly cooling after a certain age. Both the ideas must be given equal emphasis if the ideal is to be without flaw. A wife must only get greater love from her husband when she becomes a mother.

I should certainly say that for the welfare of the Indian family no girl should be married before she has completed sixteen and no boy till he has completed twenty-one. The boy or girl may be allowed to choose the partner provided the parents are given an indefinite veto. Or, the parents may be allowed to choose the partner provided the boy or girl is

given an indefinite veto. Thus, settled on the wings of love and provided with the brakes of discretion, the marriages will generally be happier than is the case now either in India or in England. A young girl left to herself may, in her inexperience, choose a flashy vagabond of depraved character and will repent her choice for life; the parents if left to themselves may choose some money-bag or big pot of most calculating and repulsive habits whose love will be mere lust without any poetry or even decent prose. Then again, some provision is absolutely essential for divorce in horrible cases as where the partner is mad or is suffering from leprosy or syphilis or other incurable disease or has married again. At present a husband in India gets relief if his wife falls in any of these categories except the last, which is impossible for her, by simply marrying again. The unjust law gives no relief to the wife.

Another horrible thing now in our country is the rule obliging every Hindu woman to be married. This not only hinders advanced studies by women and prevents them from taking to such meritorious professions as nursing and midwifery and doctoring but also produces some peculiar abominations. One of these is the horrible custom of marrying even idiots, lunatics, the deaf and dumb, etc. The miserable fathers take the easiest method of disposal and marry them off to professional wretches who take a few rupees, perform the sacrament of

marriage, eat sumptuously for four days and then go away in search of further marriages and never return. This is the worst mockery of the holy institution of marriage that the human mind can think of. In Ancient India women could become *sanyasinis* or nuns; now this safety valve has been closed by some cunning priest who cared more about marriage fees than human happiness. The iniquitous custom of demanding cash payments from the parents of girls for consenting to marry their daughters is partly the result of the rule compelling the marriage of every girl while leaving the male to do as he chooses. Of course, other reasons also contribute as the denial of shares to women at partition, and unseemly competition among parents for eligible bridegrooms. Hindu women are given no shares at partitions but have to be supported by the family and married away decently when the time comes. In a poor family with many daughters this will mean that the girls will not only exhaust all the property but also involve the unfortunate brothers in heavy debts. On the other hand, in a rich family the sisters never have spent on them anything like their share. Hence the best way of fighting the dowry evil is by giving shares to girls equally with boys and refusing to give anything more. This will have two advantages. The portion of the girl will remain hers whereas the dowry is now being swallowed up by the rapacious

husband and his even more rapacious relations. And marriage expenses will go down as the bridegroom will no longer have other people's money to transport armies of ever-hungry and never-satisfied relations to eat up the substance of the unfortunate bride's father and digest the gluttonous eating by scandalizing him and his people. An English marriage is far less expensive comparatively than an Indian one, but appeared to me to lack the sublime impressiveness of a Brahmin ceremony.

As regards the treatment of widows, we Hindus are perhaps the worst people under the sun. By giving an exaggerated importance to marriage and treating it as more important than life itself instead of regarding it merely as one of the ten sacraments of life as enjoined in our Sastras we regard the termination of a woman's marriage by the death of her husband as a greater calamity than her own death, and many fathers would hear the news of their daughters' deaths with less sorrow than the news of their widowhood though often the widowhood is an escape for the poor woman from a brutish and disease-ridden partner whose only graceful act might have been this involuntary early exit from life. Ancient Sastras have enjoined on a widow only a pure and saintly life; eating pure fruits and bulbs, wearing white cloths, adorning her hair with pure white flowers, she is to be a mother to orphans and a centre of piety and is to accrue

merit for herself and her dead husband so that their married life in the next birth may be more happy. A nefarious combination of three persons, the priest, the barber and the reversioner, led to the poor widow's being degraded from this dignified position and made to shave her head as a telling outward symbol of her degradation. The barber gained thereby four annas per month; the reversioner often got the management of the property, with its opportunity to swallow, as widows with shaven heads would be more unlikely to move about and manage their properties than if their heads were not shaven; and the priest found it easier to persuade a shaven-headed and despised widow to perform costly religious ceremonies as those would be the only occasions for the poor thing to shine and have some little joy in her life of eternal darkness. The treatment of the widows by the Hindus is atrocious in the extreme. She is made to shave her head in many cases, regarded as an evil omen, as a creature who has caused by her wicked actions in past births the death of her husband, made to work like a slave, given the dirtiest of clothing and the remnants of food, called bad names and forced to remain a widow for ever, even though in many cases she may be a virgin widow, that is, one who has never known married life but has only undergone some ceremonial marriage. I have always wondered at our inhuman oppression of the

widows who are among the noblest and most useful of India's children. Several unscrupulous persons have depicted these women as sunk in immorality. A blacker lie never was uttered. A few widows may be immoral as a few unmarried women in western countries, but this is no reason to condemn the whole tribe. It is a mistake on the part of the Hindus to forbid re-marriage for widows. It were far better to allow those who want to re-marry to do so than to see them lead lives of immorality and even commit infanticide. The denial of the right to motherhood to unmarried women in England and many widows in India has led to some members of both classes indulging in infanticide to conceal their shame. I am convinced that most of the real widows of India, apart from the virgin widows who are no widows at all, will refrain from remarrying even though society allows them to do so. Such voluntary abstinence will be a matter of legitimate pride to us whereas the present enforced widowhood will only be a prolific source of shame. In the realms of morality a thing brought about by compulsion loses almost all its value. Indeed, the advocates of enforced widowhood seem to think that if the ban were removed all the widows will re-marry. Herein they only display their colossal ignorance of the innate idealism of Hindu women and judge these noble women by their own standards. It need

hardly be stated that most of these advocates of enforced widowhood are persons who will unhesitatingly approve of a fifth marriage of a seventy-year old veteran male with a girl of twelve! It is a tragedy that most Hindu women have also been made advocates of enforced widowhood by the cunning propaganda of interested males. Even the majority of widows are for enforced widowhood just as the majority of untouchables believe in untouchability and a long-conquered race believes in the rule of the conqueror. Man is so conservative by nature that he gets attached to old institutions however pernicious. Our advocates and enforcers of enforced widowhood have not even utilized these widows for India's uplift. If they had at least educated them and made them the nation's teachers, midwives, doctors, spinners, weavers and tailors, I could have forgiven them; but they have done nothing of the kind. They have caused as much suffering as the Egyptian kings did to their slaves, but have left no pyramids behind. Theirs has been the infliction of a barren suffering for the joy of inflicting it. If only India's widows and pensioners had been properly utilized for national service, we would have had long ago universal education and an appreciable reduction of the appalling infant mortality. High as the infant mortality is now in our unfortunate country, we should not forget that it would

have been infinitely higher were it not for our widows who save many lives by their nursing and midwifery although they are untrained. Even when the ban on re-marriage is raised there will be an army of widows who refuse to re-marry; and let us see that they are trained and made the nation's teachers, doctors, nurses, midwives, spinners, weavers and tailors.

Last remains the consideration of the treatment of children. In an English family the children are drilled and disciplined to an extent which surprises and may even pain Indians. Little children will never come and peer at visitors or take any of their things like sticks or hats. They will not create any noise in the drawing room. In many rich families they will see only their governesses and servants constantly, and their parents but rarely. They will, when present at dinners, never ask for fruits and other delicacies but will rest content with what they are given. In India, of course, we have the other extreme. Children will bawl out constantly, visitors or no visitors; they will ask for whatever they want in the loudest tones possible; they may embarrass a visitor by constantly meddling with his things; they are most of the time clinging to their mothers; and they may be seen quarrelling and fighting among themselves. Mothers in India often carry even their small babies to cinemas, theatres and other public places where

they will create the hell of a row and spoil the entertainment for the other people; any woman protesting at this noise will be labelled by her sisters as a barren woman who has never known what it is to have a baby. No wonder that an Anglo-Indian witness before the Cinema Commission deposed that if the noise at cinemas were less, more Europeans and Anglo-Indians would frequent them. Most of this noise is created by Indian children, including tender babes. The great Indian Law-giver said that a child should be treated as a king till its fifth year, as a servant from its fifth till its sixteenth year, and as a friend after sixteen which is the Hindu year of majority. At present in India children, especially males, are more or less treated as kings till they are five though the Indian parent's conception of royal treatment seems to be to fill the baby's belly till it protrudes like a gourd and to allow the baby to beat or pinch any older person. From five to sixteen no consistent policy is followed; sometimes the child is treated as a slave and sometimes as a master. After sixteen no parent treats his children as friends. Assumed superiority on one side and real contempt on the other are the result. It will be to India's lasting good if the parents were to follow the Law-giver's advice, clearly understanding the real meaning of the terms King, Servant, and Friend.

At no time in the near future is India likely to abandon either marriage or the family. Hinduism

is firmly attached to both; and unless that religion disappears from the land, of which contingency even the most enthusiastic Christian missionary is not exactly hopeful, these institutions will continue to flourish though perhaps not in their present form. Changes and modifications are essential and are indeed the proofs of life; but violent uprooting of long-established and vital institutions is nothing short of suicidal.

In conclusion, I have only to add that I was born and bred in an Indian family and that I have had the good fortune of living with English families for over three years. I have enjoyed life in both just as I have enjoyed the smell of the English rose equally with the entirely different Indian jasmine. It will be, therefore, with real grief that I shall watch the break-up of the English family if ever that contingency comes, which I hope it never will.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Secrets of England's Greatness.

WHAT are the secrets of England's greatness? Why is England to-day, far and out, the mightiest power in the world judged by her possessions and fighting strength, and why is she second to none among the nations in the literary or scientific or any other sphere? The disgruntled and superficial Indian is apt to give the reason as mere possession of physical strength and the ability to thrust her yoke on others. Even her literary and scientific eminence was attributed by one of my ridiculous friends, now deceased, to her political superiority being used to compel nations to acknowledge an eminence which simply did not exist. "This wretched Milton is acknowledged by us as a great poet only because of Britain's supremacy in India and her control over our universities. So too, it is ridiculous to hold that Shakespeare is the greatest poet and dramatist ever born. And, yet, could you or I have held a different opinion and expressed it and have hoped to pass? I tell you, power and the wealth acquired by it are the foundations of all greatness", said he. While I had to admit the truth of the particular instances quoted by him I pointed out to him that there were many countries like France, Germany and the

U. S. A. which were fanatically independent and yet admired Milton and Shakespeare and acknowledged England's literary and scientific eminence. "And in return England acknowledges their literary and scientific eminence and admires those whom they consider their best poets and dramatists", said he. "It is a question of log-rolling." This same obstinate friend was of opinion that every victory of England was due to fraud, and that all the improvements in England were effected with Indian money. With persons with such warped views it is difficult to argue as they are not amenable to reason. They carry their prejudices through life without seeing any reason to modify them and indeed strengthening them by constant asseveration which takes the place of proof with some minds. However, I had one victory over this friend. 'If England got all her victories by bribes, why did not her enemies try to bribe her generals and defeat her?' I asked. 'An English general will never betray his country' said he unguardedly. 'Is that not a thing to be proud of? Can you say as much of Indian generals?' I asked, and he acknowledged his defeat by silence.

I do not deny that part of England's greatness is undoubtedly due to her great military, naval and aerial strength. But these themselves are the result of certain qualities of her citizens which have little to do with fighting qualities proper. So it is

that though the Indian is potentially as good a soldier, sailor or aviator as the Britisher he is still with all these qualities undeveloped. It is by no accident that nations become great. A physically formidable nation has certainly some good qualities like a physically strong individual though that does not mean that it is superior all along the line to the one it conquers. Thus, the barbarians who conquered the Roman Empire were simpler and sturdier peoples than the effeminate and demoralized Romans. The Huns, the Mongols, the Turks and the Mahrattas had all in their conquering days these virtues. With the English and the French it is not these primitive virtues we find but some others more suited to these advanced days. If the Indian wants to understand why such a small country like England was able to conquer India and is able to hold it with a small army let him cast off all silly prejudices and preconceptions and study the people of England and their civic virtues practised in everyday life. My aim below is to describe some of the most outstanding of those qualities.

There is in England a public spirit the like of which is not to be seen in India. Several thousands of people render services of the most valuable nature every day honorarily. Many fire brigades are manned wholly by such workers. With a noble disregard of personal safety these shop-keepers and others get up blazing houses and rescue hundreds

of unlucky creatures who would have otherwise perished. In one case one of these volunteers had in the course of the rescue of a baby from the second floor got severely burnt and was confined to bed for fifteen days. I asked him 'What are you paid for this job?' 'Nothing, it is honorary' said he. 'Then why do you do it?' I continued. 'Somebody must do it; else, the country will go to dogs', he replied. He was a petty retail shop-keeper who would in the course of his trade try to fleece his customer as much as he could, and yet he cared for his country's good, a thing which even trained idealistic social workers in India sometimes forget. In this country, public spirit is at so low an ebb among the ordinary people that recently a child of ten was drowned in a Madras tank in the presence of more than fifty adults none of whom tried to get into the tank and attempt a rescue. Contrast with this the heroic self-sacrifice found in such cases in England, and we at once get a measure of our degradation. It was not always so with us, and even now, when trained, our citizens do show that they are no whit behind any nation on earth. But, alas, there is no training in social service in our schools which are too busy with scoring passes to worry themselves with anything else. The self-sacrifice of our flood and famine volunteers and the brilliant record of our scouts show our inherent possibilities. If we are to rise to our full height we must get rid

that though the Indian is potentially as good a soldier, sailor or aviator as the Britisher he is still with all these qualities undeveloped. It is by no accident that nations become great. A physically formidable nation has certainly some good qualities like a physically strong individual though that does not mean that it is superior all along the line to the one it conquers. Thus, the barbarians who conquered the Roman Empire were simpler and sturdier peoples than the effeminate and demoralized Romans. The Huns, the Mongols, the Turks and the Mahrattas had all in their conquering days these virtues. With the English and the French it is not these primitive virtues we find but some others more suited to these advanced days. If the Indian wants to understand why such a small country like England was able to conquer India and is able to hold it with a small army let him cast off all silly prejudices and preconceptions and study the people of England and their civic virtues practised in everyday life. My aim below is to describe some of the most outstanding of those qualities.

There is in England a public spirit the like of which is not to be seen in India. Several thousands of people render services of the most valuable nature every day honorarily. Many fire brigades are manned wholly by such workers. With a noble disregard of personal safety these shop-keepers and others get up blazing houses and rescue hundreds

of unlucky creatures who would have otherwise perished. In one case one of these volunteers had in the course of the rescue of a baby from the second floor got severely burnt and was confined to bed for fifteen days. I asked him 'What are you paid for this job?' 'Nothing, it is honorary' said he. 'Then why do you do it?' I continued. 'Somebody must do it; else, the country will go to dogs', he replied. He was a petty retail shop-keeper who would in the course of his trade try to fleece his customer as much as he could, and yet he cared for his country's good, a thing which even trained idealistic social workers in India sometimes forget. In this country, public spirit is at so low an ebb among the ordinary people that recently a child of ten was drowned in a Madras tank in the presence of more than fifty adults none of whom tried to get into the tank and attempt a rescue. Contrast with this the heroic self-sacrifice found in such cases in England, and we at once get a measure of our degradation. It was not always so with us, and even now, when trained, our citizens do show that they are no whit behind any nation on earth. But, alas, there is no training in social service in our schools which are too busy with scoring passes to worry themselves with anything else. The self-sacrifice of our flood and famine volunteers and the brilliant record of our scouts show our inherent possibilities. If we are to rise to our full height we must get rid

that though the Indian is potentially as good a soldier, sailor or aviator as the Britisher he is still with all these qualities undeveloped. It is by no accident that nations become great. A physically formidable nation has certainly some good qualities like a physically strong individual though that does not mean that it is superior all along the line to the one it conquers. Thus, the barbarians who conquered the Roman Empire were simpler and sturdier peoples than the effeminate and demoralized Romans. The Huns, the Mongols, the Turks and the Mahrattas had all in their conquering days these virtues. With the English and the French it is not these primitive virtues we find but some others more suited to these advanced days. If the Indian wants to understand why such a small country like England was able to conquer India and is able to hold it with a small army let him cast off all silly prejudices and preconceptions and study the people of England and their civic virtues practised in every-day life. My aim below is to describe some of the most outstanding of those qualities.

There is in England a public spirit the like of which is not to be seen in India. Several thousands of people render services of the most valuable nature every day honorarily. Many fire brigades are manned wholly by such workers. With a noble disregard of personal safety these shop-keepers and others get up blazing houses and rescue hundreds

of unlucky creatures who would have otherwise perished. In one case one of these volunteers had in the course of the rescue of a baby from the second floor got severely burnt and was confined to bed for fifteen days. I asked him 'What are you paid for this job?' 'Nothing, it is honorary' said he. 'Then why do you do it?' I continued. 'Somebody must do it; else, the country will go to dogs', he replied. He was a petty retail shop-keeper who would in the course of his trade try to fleece his customer as much as he could, and yet he cared for his country's good, a thing which even trained idealistic social workers in India sometimes forget. In this country, public spirit is at so low an ebb among the ordinary people that recently a child of ten was drowned in a Madras tank in the presence of more than fifty adults none of whom tried to get into the tank and attempt a rescue. Contrast with this the heroic self-sacrifice found in such cases in England, and we at once get a measure of our degradation. It was not always so with us, and even now, when trained, our citizens do show that they are no whit behind any nation on earth. But, alas, there is no training in social service in our schools which are too busy with scoring passes to worry themselves with anything else. The self-sacrifice of our flood and famine volunteers and the brilliant record of our scouts show our inherent possibilities. If we are to rise to our full height we must get rid

of caste prejudices and regard all as equal. At present it is a shameful fact that if a depressed class man were lying on the road in a precarious condition few high caste people of the old school will render him any aid. This warp in the mind must go if Mother India is to take her rightful place among the nations. Even where we see a desire to do honorary work in India it is often with an eye to fame or a title that the volunteer proffers his services and not from pure philanthropic motives. He keeps a minute record of the good things he did and the evil things which he could have done but did not do and exhibits them periodically to every visitor and especially to government officials and newspaper correspondents. I know some most cultured and educated Indians who have got printed an exhaustive list of their good deeds and also the words of praise uttered in respect of them by government officials and national leaders. The modern Indian's avarice for testimonials and his uncanny skill in getting them are something amazing. Prominent people in this country also attach little weight to their testimonials and freely grant them to all kinds of absurd and undeserving persons. In fact, whenever an Indian gentleman is unwilling to give a subscription or donation he is requested by the mendicant at least to give a testimonial and generally cheerfully gives it as the easiest way of getting freedom for

himself and passing on the pest to others. Sometimes a modern Indian will not scruple even to claim credit for an act he never did. A particularly bad instance was that of a cultured Indian who arranged with another to fall into five-feet water and then saved him and duly published this in a prominent daily. In England the missionaries, the hospitals and schools collect enormous sums of money with the aid of honorary workers. We also in India have now begun to follow though rumours of swallowings are common; but that is inevitable while a system is in its infancy. A more serious evil is that the ordinary Indian does not care to see that the subscription is applied to the purpose for which it was given. So some sums collected for public purposes find their way into unscrupulous men's pockets, and nobody worries though several know. A minor evil is that some big people put down huge sums without the least intention of paying them and indeed on that understanding. The subscription-hunter agrees to this trick in order to get good subscriptions from more honest people who will be sure to pay. These habits are fast disappearing with the rising into prominence of a new school of leaders.

Almost all the hospitals of England are maintained by public subscriptions. India had the first hospitals maintained by citizens. The great hospital at Pataliputra was wholly maintained by the municipality and the contributions of wealthy citizens

and was the first thing of its kind in the world. There is a beautiful tradition which says that the hospital even refused, with thanks, the princely aid offered by the Emperor Asoka on the score that thanks to His Majesty's beneficent rule the citizens were able to run the institution themselves and so the money might be diverted to the purchase of medicines and drugs to be exported to the less fortunate neighbouring countries like Syria and Egypt. And so, it seems, was done. Well, things are far different in modern India. The cry is everywhere for government help. The rich rarely support hospitals or schools. Many of the biggest colleges and universities in England owe their existence to private munificence which, though equally abounding in Ancient India, dried up in later years and is only slowly reviving. Honorary philanthropic work among the poor and the sick and the degraded is largely left to Christian missionaries from foreign countries although it is some satisfaction to see Indians gradually taking an increasing part in such work.

Englishmen exhibit their public spirit also in aiding the police in detecting crime. A certain Englishman arrested a miserable old hag who was stealing a withered cabbage from a big nursery owned by a wealthy man and handed her over to the nearest policeman and duly gave evidence against her. The wretch was fined twenty shillings

and in default sentenced to undergo simple imprisonment for two weeks. Some persons in court took pity on the beggar and subscribed small sums towards the fine. The man who arrested her subscribed half a crown! When questioned as regards his apparently inconsistent conduct his reply was 'I arrested her as a citizen since she had committed theft, but I have also humane feelings just the same as others and so subscribed towards the fine. I see nothing inconsistent in my conduct.' In India, people are most averse to discharging their elementary duties as citizens. I have known a highly educated man run away, after seeing the corpse of an unfortunate woman who had committed suicide, instead of giving information to the police as he did not want to be dragged as a witness at the inquest. Many respectable men in India are so afraid of giving evidence against notorious depredators that they request the police not to cite them and even offer some bribe for this favour. Illicit exactions are constantly being paid by Indians of all classes from reluctance to create a row or file a complaint. At almost every ferry the charge levied from passers-by by the contractors and their agents are far more than the legal dues. In England this kind of blackmail cannot be practised though perhaps the tip system, which is universal, is a still worse form of blackmail albeit pretended to be a voluntary largesse. Public nuisances in India are enormous

owing to the reluctance of the average Indian to proceed against his neighbour in other than purely individual disputes. The horrible state of sanitation even in our towns is due to people allowing their neighbours to pollute their side of the drain and taking the same liberties with their own side. The honorary justices and jurymen of England cannot be said to be altogether satisfactory, but ours are even worse though I have not yet heard of any Indian jury destroying the *corpus delicti* in court as a recent American jury did by drinking up the incriminating liquor and then finding the delinquent not guilty.

A remarkable way in which the public spirit of Englishmen manifests itself is in the periodical searches for missing persons and rendering valuable assistance to the police in murder cases. It does one good to read that a fleet of cars scoured Dartmoor or some other desolate region free in order to trace out missing persons. When will such a thing be possible in India? Again, almost undetectable murder cases have been detected, sometimes after years, owing to the co-operation of the citizens. All the clues and suspicions of the police as are communicable are published in all the newspapers, and those citizens who have any information at once get into touch with the police. Two sensational sea-coast murders were detected thus. The many little acts of help which the citizens render one another

are not the least among the manifestations of this public spirit.

Another sterling virtue of the Britisher is his respect for the law and trust in the courts. A striking instance within my own experience will show the great respect for law which the Britishers have. I was in the non-smoking compartment of a train about to start from Oxford for London. There was an English non-smoker also in the same compartment. Another Englishman got in and began to smoke. The English non-smoker objected. The other said 'Shut up, you are a crank'. The non-smoker quoted the railway regulations. 'Damn the regulations!' said the other. A tussle ensued, the non-smoker trying to eject the smoker with as little force as was absolutely necessary and the other resisting the ejection in an equally constitutional manner. Hearing the hubbub, a number of men with pipes and cigars in their mouths came from the neighbouring compartments and, ascertaining the cause of the quarrel, pulled the smoker out. 'He is a crank' he cried out. 'So he is' said they 'but the law is with him and the law must be obeyed.' The great respect of Englishmen for law courts and their implicit confidence in them was well illustrated during the trial of Bottomley. While the trial was on he had thousands of supporters who believed in his innocence and hotly argued out the point with opponents. The day after his

conviction all were equally convinced about his guilt. His former opponents said 'We always said so' and his former defenders merely said 'We didn't think so. He was too deep for us.' Not a single person presumed to question the correctness of the judicial finding. Perhaps, an even more striking instance is this: A certain English general was brutally murdered by two Sinn Feiners in the heart of London opposite his own house. The police and a howling mob soon reached the spot, and the policemen arrested the two murderers. The mob which had witnessed the last stages of the murder wanted to lynch the murderers; and the policemen, who were Englishmen and felt as much indignation as any among the mob, protected the murderers from mob violence though they got some minor injuries in the process. 'Why do you prevent us from doing justice on these murderers?' asked one of the mob. 'You know that they committed the murder, and they themselves have proudly confessed it.' 'All true' was the brief reply of a policeman. 'But the law requires that a court should be satisfied that these men committed this murder and should sentence them as it thinks fit, and the law must be obeyed.' Other instances of this confidence in the courts were two murder cases in which the courts awarded death sentences though the evidence was all circumstantial and, to the lay mind, far from convincing. Still, all the newspapers and citizens

accepted the verdict without criticism, and their confidence was justified, for the accused in both the cases owned up their guilt just before hanging. I wish that a day would come in India when our public will have as implicit a faith in our courts and our courts will become so able, impartial, fearless and honest as to merit it. The security of tenure of the English judges is largely responsible for their fearlessness and impartiality even where the Crown is a party.

Unity in crises is another great civic quality of the Britisher. In times of crises, when the country's honour or safety or prestige is at stake, all disputes are postponed for the time being and a united front is shown towards the foreigner. Thus when Mustapha Kemal Pasha was threatening to fortify the Dardenelles and close the straits there were keen differences in the English press about the desirability of going to war for this. In the midst of this war of words the Cabinet sent a stiff note to Kemal Pasha and despatched two squadrons from Aldershot to the Dardenelles. I was surprised to find in all the morning papers photos of the troops sent and leaders to the effect that now that the nation had committed itself all differences would cease till the crisis was over. As one Englishman told me 'Now our business is to defeat those damned Turks if they are unwise enough to force a war. After that, we shall see who was right

in the discussion.' The consequence of this attitude was that Kemal Pasha wisely climbed down and the crisis was averted. In India such differences would have become acuter in the face of the crisis, and the opponent would have scored. Till we have learnt this unity in crises we will not be able to conduct our own foreign policy. The first requisite for this is a passionate love of the motherland, as passionate a love as the Englishman has for England. It is sheer nonsense to adopt the League of Nations or any other association as a substitute for the motherland in our affections. Nationalism has its evils if carried to excess, but we can never be useful members of a league of nations unless we are first a united and homogeneous nation. Those who advise us not to think nationally but only internationally are not our friends. We must think nationally before we can think internationally. An Indian talking of internationalism now may make a cynic compare him to a beggar advocating communism. This love of our motherland must not be a mere verbal passion but must carry with it the readiness to sacrifice everything for her glory and the resolve never to betray her. All the children of the motherland must be equally loved, the demon of communalism being thoroughly exorcised. From the time of the infamous Ambhi till to-day there has not been any real nationalism or patriotism of this type. However, there are now signs of their

coming. Once we become in reality a nation, there is no danger of our overlooking the claims of internationalism. No Indian can oppose the good of the world when that is not really opposed to India's just claims. I observed everywhere in England a tender love for the motherland or the fatherland as the Englishmen like to call their charming land. This did not prevent some of England's most ardent lovers from taking a prominent part in the league of nations. The same thing applies to India.

A not less noteworthy characteristic of Britishers is their love of orderly progress and hatred of all revolution. This quality was clearly exhibited when the triple alliance of miners, railwaymen and transport workers threatened a strike, without waiting for further arbitration and with intent to coerce the nation to accept the miners' demands. But the nation was determined not to be coerced. Volunteers enrolled in thousands to prevent riots and to attend to transport of coal, etc. This determined attitude made the railwaymen and transport workers back out, and only the miners struck. There was a prolonged strike by these brave men, but finally they were starved out. When the mine-owners wanted to take advantage of their defeat and impose harsher terms on them than those offered at the beginning of the crisis, the nation insisted on the original terms being adhered to. This showed its sweet reasonableness which is

essential for any country if it wants to prevent a revolution. During some other strikes volunteers have transported coal, preserved order and attended to other vital needs of the nation. Even the bulk of British labourers are not for revolution and have little sympathy for Bolshevism or a social revolution brought about by violence. If they believe in class war at all, which is doubtful, they believe in waging it with the sole aid of strictly constitutional weapons like the capture of parliament and the municipalities.

Another great asset of England now is the absolute freedom of her citizens from religious prejudices in matters political. In days gone by, Englishmen were far more intolerant than the Indians of to-day and with less justification as England had only sectarian differences and not such vast religious differences as exist between Hinduism and Islam. But now things have radically changed and though here and there we may hear stray opinions against Papists and Jews the nation at large worries little as to what religion a minister or official belongs and whether he has a religion at all. In fact, some of the most prominent officials in the British Empire recently have been Jews, a tribe which was horribly persecuted for centuries by Englishmen. Now Englishmen only look to a man's character and not his religion. So there is not the slightest danger of the followers of any

religion siding with national enemies. In India we are still having bitter religious hatreds. We may well take a lesson from England in this matter.

The thirst for knowledge and the desire to utilize it for the country's benefit is another predominant trait which should not be overlooked. Englishmen realize that the moment they become intellectually stagnant their greatness will be a thing of the past. So learning and research are encouraged both by the State and by private citizens. In experiments the Englishman is careless of loss of money or even life. He will envisage the wreck of costly aeroplanes and submarines with a cheerfulness which the Indian, who claims to be less material, cannot muster. Unless we also acquire this generous disregard of life and wealth we will never discover anything great. It has been well said that every brick in the palace of liberty is cemented with human blood. The discoveries of radium have caused mutilation and death to many noble souls; aviation has also levied its heavy toll; and millions have had to sacrifice their lives for securing social, economic, political and intellectual liberty. There is compulsory education in England up to a certain standard, and advanced and specialized education in all branches exist for those who need them. The health of the students is cared for by expert doctors who examine them periodically and send the results of the examinations

to the parents who are bound to get the diseases, if any, treated. Model suburbs are laid out under the supervision of experts, and beautiful parks created to serve as lungs for the great cities. Committees are appointed from time to time to report on such diseases as venereal disease, their extent, causes, and methods of prevention and cure. Commissions are appointed to consider the best methods of increasing trade and manufactures and encouraging home industries, and most people buy home-made goods in preference to cheaper and equally good foreign articles without however loudly tom-toming their intention to do so as Indians are doing. From the far outposts of the empire the Englishman sends his orders, even for clothes, to English firms, and though the slogan 'British goods are best' has been diplomatically withdrawn from post office seals it is enshrined in the hearts of Englishmen who constantly act on it and preach it in season and out of season to their non-British neighbours. Above all, experts go into the working of educational institutions from time to time and suggest valuable changes. The citizens take a lively interest in all these reports and daily grow more and more educated, prosperous and powerful. They take a pride in their empire and by their civic virtues ensure its safety. Thus, if England is mighty and powerful it is because of the strong civic virtues of her citizens. If these

disappear, which is most unlikely, that day will disappear her fighting strength as well as political power. In a word, England's power rests not on her soldiers or aviators or even sailors but on her citizens.

CHAPTER XV.

What India should learn from the West and What It should teach It.

HAS the West any lessons to teach India? Does it need any lessons from India? Can we learn anything of value from westerners, can they learn anything of value from us? These are questions worthy of being answered at the end of a book like this though the answers are bound to be imperfect. For all practical purposes India may be taken as a typical representative of the East and England as a typical representative of the West.

Some westerners have told us from time to time what we have to learn from them. These include honesty, brotherliness, morality in sexual relations, real religion as opposed to superstition, learning in the arts and sciences, courage, physical, mental and moral, kindness towards all living creatures, the dignity of labour, a robust optimism and a will to reform the world. Let us examine these claims dispassionately.

No one can seriously hold that the West can teach honesty to the East. The village servants in India, who are paid ten shillings six pence per month and get no pension, are entrusted with hundreds of pounds of government money for being transported across wild jungles to the government

treasuries, and rarely is there a case of defalcation. So too, the equally miserably paid postal runners and postmen are entrusted every day with hundreds of rupees worth of Money Orders and Value Payable Parcels and discharge their trust with an honesty which has excited the admiration and wonder of many an English official. I do not think that any western country can beat this record of some of India's poorest and most illiterate children. This honesty did not begin with the British rule. The British only utilized the system they found before them. No doubt, I may be told that western commercial honesty is greater. It is not greater in all western countries. It is certainly greater now in England and Germany if we regard relatively fixed prices and same quality as tests. But if we are to take into account the monstrous swindles perpetrated on the public in western countries, including England and Germany, such swindles as are caricatured in Tono Bungay, we shall hesitate before praising the honesty of western firms. Add to this the fact that even in England there are sometimes different prices for different customers and that in France and Italy merchants are as unscrupulous as in India, and we can but agree with the Sanskrit poet who said that a merchant must tell a lie if he is to amass wealth. Is there any country in the world where merchants don't utter lies for selling their wares? What are most advertisements but shameless lies in

black and white? If English and German merchants have recently learnt to make goods correspond to sample and to charge each class of customers much the same price it is only intelligent self-interest which makes them do so and not any passion for honesty. The atrocious lies indulged in by western diplomatists are additional proofs that the West is not exactly fitted to teach anybody honesty. Lies are so common in diplomacy that a dementi though it denotes the same as denial or contradiction, it connotes that no more credence need be given to it than is usually given to the "honest men sènt to lie abroad for the good of their country" to quote the learned authors of the King's English. If further proof were wantéd to show the colossal unfitness of the would-be teacher of honesty, the horrible campaigns of lies spread by both parties in the Great War should be enough. Indeed, when I was in England a learned and pious gentleman was writing in the papers on the value and necessity of white lies for the peace and well-being of humanity and did succeed in proving his point to some extent. If you are tired of attending on your sick wife who is ailing for several months and if she were to tell you 'Darling, I am causing you endless trouble' surely it is more gracious and proper to utter a white lie 'It is no trouble at all for me, dearest; it gives me endless joy to be near you and to be able to nurse you' and bring a joyous smile on the wan lips than

to say the brutal truth 'Yes, you are causing me the hell of a trouble; I wish you would get better or die'. So too, if you accidentally trod on your neighbour's fat toe and took a devilish delight in it, still, for the sake of peace it is much better to say 'Oh, I am awfully sorry' than to blurt out the truth 'I am devilish glad I did it' and it would be better also for your neighbour, though he suspects your secret delight, to reply to your white lie by another white lie 'Oh, it doesn't matter' than to speak the truth and say 'You rascal, you gloat over it; come, let me punch your head'. Still, when all is said, a nation which preaches the necessity of white lies is not the best conceivable teacher of honesty. The very western proverb 'Honesty is the best policy' would seem to show that it is policy rather than principle which makes western merchants follow honesty. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not pretend that India or any other country is superior to western countries in honesty or can teach them honesty. My point is simply that they are in no way better than we in this very important matter and cannot teach us. All the talk of a westerner's word being as good as his bond, and cheap gibes at eastern perfidy are mere exercises in rhetoric which ought to deceive no one. The only serious argument which an Englishman can bring is the comparative absence of corruption in England now and its comparative presence in modern

India. I must candidly admit that there is less corruption in the inferior public service and especially the constabulary in England than in the same cadres in India. The greatest reason for this is the ridiculously low pay of these people in India. The London constable gets more than fifteen times the pay of his Indian brother; even allowing for the difference in the value of money and the cost of living, this means that he is getting about three times the pay. If we pay three times the present pay and enforce discipline we can get educated men of character who will stand comparison with the London constables. So too with the low-paid clerks and other inferior servants. Given the same adequate pay, I do not think that the Indian will be behind any other race in honesty. The spoils system of America and its periodical prodigies of corruption are unknown to India. I must also add that inferior government servants in France and Italy appear to be no better than their confrères in this country. The peons of India with their demand for baksheesh are fully rivalled by their western cousins with their insatiable demand for tips. Some of my friends have asked me whether titles and army officerships are not buyable in England. What I heard in England seemed to show that the latter practice is rare after the late war but that the former is still flourishing. One ingenious English friend said to me 'I admit that these corruptions do exist but I

must give some explanation for their existence. We believe in the party system, and parties require money. When fools are willing to pay for titles enormous sums, why should honest men be pestered? That seems to be the logic. Not one farthing out of the sums paid goes into private pockets; strict accounts are kept and are open for inspection not only by the members of the Cabinet but also by the leader of the opposition. So it is not exactly private corruption. The selling of commissions, when that nefarious practice went on, had also an explanation. Army officers have, as you know, to spend far more than what they get as pay. So the sum demanded as price was a kind of guarantee of the man's means. Besides, it was always spent in a banquet given to the regiment in honour of his appointment. Therein it resembled the entrance fee demanded from a freemason. Mind you, I am not justifying these corruptions; I am only explaining them.'

Brotherliness is a virtue practised by western nations only among their own nationals and so is not the real quality at all. A Christ or a Buddha embracing the whole of humanity as brethren has not yet come from the West. But inside the nation there is a real spirit of fraternity which is wanting in caste and creed-ridden India.

Moderation and morality in sexual relations is a virtue which some westerners profess they can

teach us. They charge our country with being steeped in sexual indulgence. It is a queer thing to say of the land which preached Brahmacharya but is alas, not wholly untrue. To see our indigenous doctors spending precious lives in devising medicines to increase lust, our newspapers devoting long columns of advertisement to all kinds of aphrodisiacs our public men giving certificates of merit to such diabolical traffickers in lust, and our book-sellers stocking and selling all kinds of obscene publications and, worst of all, our temples portraying on their walls most indecent sculptures will make any Indian bend down his head with shame at the sad fall of our country from total abstinence to sensuality. But that is not saying that the West is better. If the westerner is not so vociferous it is because he is satiated with sex. Dancing and other institutions satisfy to some extent his craving for sex which does not therefore break out into an orgy like the suppressed passion of the Indian. After seeing sea-side life in England and the pleasure resorts of France and Germany I am by no means satisfied that the West is less steeped in sensuality than the East though it hides its deeds. I found some horrible aphrodisiacs advertised in some western papers also; only, they were called tonics or pick-me-ups. The average English husband is not more faithful than his Indian brother, while the average Indian wife will have a slight superiority in this respect

over her English sister though this may be, and perhaps justly, attributed to her lesser freedom and correspondingly lesser opportunity to go astray. The organized prostitution of Paris is every whit as reprehensible as the Devadasi system in India. Both are abominations which must stink in every honest man's nostrils. The clandestine prostitution in some other western countries is equally odious. And what have the westerners done to wean India from sensuality? Nothing except abuse the Indians and add their own quota to the immorality in the country. I am convinced that the West cannot teach India Brahmacharya or even sexual moderation. For that we must go to the teachings of our forefathers.

Real religion as opposed to superstition is also a thing beyond the power of the West to teach us. It is impossible to prove that Christianity is less superstitious or more sublime than Hinduism or Buddhism or Islam though, of course, it is capable of indefinite assertion and broadcasting. But the West has not got even the original Christianity of Christ who, be it remembered, was an easterner to his marrow. It has accepted the Gospels without the Sermon on the Mount. The most tortuous meanings are sought to be put on simple words in a desperate attempt to evade following their spirit. Thus, 'Leave everything and follow me' is said by some westerners to be an exhortation to dying men!

So too, a man is said to be bound to turn the other cheek also to the smiter only if he had already smitten on one, and therefore violence even to the extent of shooting him dead is permissible in order to prevent him from smiting on one cheek! The same argument is used as regards the famous advice to give the cloak also. Perhaps enough has been said to show the West's utter incapacity to teach the East real religion.

In the matter of arts and sciences, however, India has a very great deal to learn from the West. India has slept a long sleep of centuries and has, in the course of it, lost that supremacy in the arts and sciences which at one time was hers. Now she must eat the humble pie and learn reverently at the feet of her former disciples. She need feel no sense of false shame as knowledge is not one nation's property and she has given enough to the world in days past not to be ashamed to ask for some now. We are woefully behindhand in the arts and sciences though the old skill of hand and agility of mind have fortunately not left us. A single Tagore or Bose or Ramanujam for a vast country like ours is only a confession of intellectual bankruptcy. We ought to be heartily ashamed of our lack of originality in these degenerate days. We have many thousands of lawyers, some of them among the ablest in the world, and yet not a single satisfactory book on Hindu jurisprudence has been written though

the Hindu Law-givers and jurists were as able as the best Roman jurists, and their laws have governed hundreds of millions of people for the last three thousand years and more whereas Roman Law in its proudest days governed only forty millions and has ceased to govern any for the last so many centuries. Cases and rulings are printed in many hackneyed text-books and compendiums to which lawyers are not ashamed to put their names, but a respectable treatise on the growth of Hindu jurisprudence and the basic principles underlying it by an Indian is still to come. The same thing applies to the doctors of the western type. Research into ancient Indian medicine is neglected by them. There are some famous physicians and surgeons among them, but not one has discovered a single new operation or new mode of treating a disease or a cure for a hitherto incurable disease. 'We are a nation of meat-eaters and so prescribe beef-tea and chicken broth and panopepton. We are a nation of drinkers and so prescribe whisky and brandy. I can't see why you who are vegetarians and water-drinkers should not have other equally effective substitutes discovered for you by your doctors', said an eminent English doctor to me, and the remarks were as just as they were correct. Our professors and scholars too must share the blame. There is not a single satisfactory book on the whole of Indian history written by an Indian. The same remarks

apply to astronomy, chemistry, geography and other sciences. We have to bestir ourselves if we are to catch up the western nations. Fortunately for us, our national awakening has also stimulated researches into our ancient lore. England, France Italy, Germany and the U.S.A. are the countries from whom we can get the best aid in the acquisition of the most advanced arts and sciences.

I do not, for a moment, mean by the foregoing that India is innately lacking in originality or invention or that her history is one long record of failure as our western brethren are only too anxious to impress on us. We had our periods of great geniuses; no nation had longer periods or greater geniuses. Charaka and Susruta in medicine; Parasaramuni, Aryabhatta, Varahamihira and Brahmagupta in astronomy; Chanakya and Sukracharya in politics and economics; Panini and Patanjali in grammar; Manu, Yagnavalkya, Apastamba, Narada, Jimutavahana and Vignaneswara in law; Jayadeva, Haridas Swami and Tansen in music; Bhaskaracharya and Lilavati in mathematics; Sri Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, Kapila, Asvaghosha and Sankaracharya in philosophy; Valmiki and Vyasa, Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, Tiruvalluvar and Tulsidas in literature; Chandragupta Maurya, Asoka, Samudragupta, Harsha, Akbar and Sivaji among great warriors and rulers; these are a few given to the world by Mother India, and he will

be a bold man who can dare assert that any country can beat this record. To assert of a land that gave to the world these geniuses in addition to the wheel, the cow and the zero, let alone rice, sugar and sapphire, that it is barren in originality is as ridiculous as to assert of a lady with seven children that she is sterile simply because during the last two years she has not delivered a child or of an apple tree that it is barren because it did not give fruits in the last season or of the ocean that it has ceased to produce high waves because many high waves have fallen and a temporary calm has ensued. A period of rest and recuperation is essential to nations as to individuals after strenuous work. Even a period of apparent retardation of civilization, like the falling of a wave to facilitate the formation of another, is sometimes necessary to renew the lost vitality. Some nations which have not mastered this secret of life have gone under like Assyria, Babylon, Carthage, Egypt, Greece and Rome. India which was old in their days is young to day when all of them are dead and gone and new countries which were unknown to civilization then, like England and France, are growing old, because the secret of life is known to her and she has followed it. To the cheap gibes of westerners Indians can reply with dignity 'We were when you were not, we shall be when you have ceased to be'. It will be most fatal for the future of our nation if our children

were to be taught that we are an inferior race. The inferiority complex so implanted will be as pernicious as it has been with the depressed classes. Let our teachers beware of instilling such subtle poison into young minds. Let them, while admitting India's poor output of originality in the last two centuries, explain to them our glorious achievements in the past and incite them to emulation. I do not want them to teach that we are superior to other races, but they should also never teach that we are intrinsically inferior to any race on earth.

Courage, physical, mental and moral, is a thing which the West can teach us in these days of our degeneracy. At present half the population of India is devoid of physical courage and cloaks its cowardice under the noble garb of Ahimsa or Non-Violence. Non-Violence, as preached and practised by its apostle, is capable of representing the very highest form of physical, mental and moral courage, but in the hands of lesser men easily becomes a synonym for cowardice. Ahimsa is, strictly speaking, something different from Non-Violence as it prohibits only unjustifiable violence and permits the use of justifiable violence whereas Non-Violence prohibits the use of violence on any occasion. In India at present the majority of the Hindus have become effeminate and cowardly by long centuries of conquest and non-military life

though even they have the stuff in them to become excellent soldiers, given the requisite training. They can endure starvation for long and have got good mathematical brains so useful in the artillery. Machine guns are no respecters of muscles, and correct aim is far more important with the modern soldier than an athletic body. So even the unmuscular Indians of the plains can be made excellent soldiers if they are trained. Their cowardice can only be overcome by conscription. In countries similarly situated, that has been found to be the only way. Of course, there are the martial races, the Sikhs, the Pathans, the Rajputs, the Gurkhas and the Mahrattas, but no country will be safe in these days if its citizens do not all take part in national defence. The average educated Indian has little physical courage though things are improving. In England there is more physical courage. If an Englishman sees a burglar or rowdy committing a crime he is almost sure to go to the help of the victim. An average educated Indian is almost sure to seek his own ignoble safety. There is a Tamil proverb which asks good men to run away from the wicked, and the Indian is only too glad to follow such excellent advice so entirely in accordance with his own inner promptings. Many of us have to develop the courage to go to the aid of the oppressed regardless of consequences, for death is far preferable to safety bought

by cowardice. In the Oxford University thousands went to the front as volunteers long before conscription was enforced. Such a thing cannot be thought of in Madras. War may be a horrible thing, but it does bring out the stuff in a man. Let us not scorn all the military virtues. Some of them are essential for a nation's prosperity. Life is a continuous war against disease and death. The fighting spirit and the resolve never to go under are very valuable qualities highly useful even for securing the victories of peace. All our boys must be taught physical courage. Strange as it may seem, it is teachable and implantable and need not necessarily be born with the individual though it will be all the better if it were a quality inherited at birth. The Nepalese have a proverb 'The Gurkha is born a soldier; the Gurung is made a soldier'. In the same way we southerners may strive to have and justify a proverb 'The Mahratta is born a soldier; the Madrasi is made a soldier.' So much for physical courage. Mental and moral courage is even more deplorably lacking in our land. Many a Hindu performs numerous ceremonies without the least belief in them and merely from fear of the public. Guests, invited and uninvited, stay on in the family, eating up the substance, and the Indian householder, while intensely disliking their stay and making semi-audible remarks behind their back, will never ask them to go away

before he is ruined. Many respectable men allow worthless fellows to waste their precious time by insensate gossip which they have no desire to hear, simply owing to lack of moral courage to ask them to clear out. Countless estimable persons give charity to valiant beggars simply because neighbours are looking on and they might be mistaken to be uncharitable persons if they did not give something. Instances can be multiplied. A critical spirit is the result of mental and moral courage and it is no wonder that it is absent in the absence of those qualities. In the realm of physical, mental and moral courage the West has still a great deal to teach us.

Kindness towards all living creatures is an ancient eastern doctrine originally alien to the West but borrowed and improved on by it during the last fifty years. Theoretically, we are still superior in the greater perfection of our ideals though it is very hard to say whether our unthinking heartless cruelty towards the dumb animals or the deliberate killing of vast numbers of such animals for food in the western countries is worse. As our cruelty embraces only the domestic animals and theirs all, we are perhaps not the worse. In any event, no case is made out for the West to act as teacher of kindness towards animals any more than cannibals rearing up babies with meticulous care only to swallow them up as soon as they are fat and plump can be regarded as teachers of baby welfare. There

are, however, a few individual men in the West who love the dumb creation as passionately as any Indian saint and whose knowledge enables them to minister to their needs better.

India has much to learn from the West in the matter of dignity of labour. The ancient Hindus regarded certain occupations like scavenging, meat-selling, leather-working, shaving and funeral-ground watching as most degrading for any caste Hindu but allotted these to certain outcastes. All except the second are highly useful and not at all immoral. Still, a high caste Hindu will rather be an unproductive lawyer or even a thief or cheat than take to these professions. The educated members of even the depressed classes are unwilling to follow these ancestral trades and ape their high caste brethren in flocking to the unproductive professions. In England there is at present no such reluctance though shaving and scavenging are not regarded even there as dignified occupations. In this country the prejudice is so great even now that I once saw a whole village of caste Hindus suffer the reeking smell of a decomposed body of a buffalo for three days because the local scavenger caste man had some grudge against the village and would not turn up, though no less than twenty messengers had gone for him, and none of the villagers would stoop to carry the carcass. Finally, some students were induced to remove and bury

it. This last act is a sign of returning health. An even more ludicrous instance of this prejudice I met with in a Hindu student in England. He was a nice fellow, and we became acquainted with each other. I asked him what course he was studying for. He coloured and said 'Mr. Ayyar, I am ashamed to say that I committed a terrible mistake. Pray don't press the question.' Finally, I ascertained from him with great difficulty that he was learning to make sanitary pots, commodes and the like! From his shame and confusion one would have thought that he was learning thieving or brothel-keeping. When I mentioned this to him he laughed and said 'Both those professions are more respectable in our country than scavenging' and I had to painfully acknowledge that he was right. We have still to learn the dignity of all kinds of honest labour.

The West is, on the whole, robustly optimistic whereas our country is characterized by devitalizing pessimism. We realize the powerlessness of man in the hands of Nature and God, and the utter insignificance of this life compared with the life beyond, and the result is a despair of improving the world and a concentration on the hereafter and death which is its gate. This realization may produce sublime results in some exceptionally great and powerful minds. But the effect on the ordinary man is most devitalizing. He has not the ability to

concentrate on the hereafter or the courage to face death. Yet he has grasped the futility of this life and its strivings only too well. So, he strives neither for this world nor for the next and drags on a useless existence with no elevating ideals and full of vicious pleasures which are sure to suggest themselves to an idle brain devoid of ideals. In this path of senseless sensuality he is encouraged by the thought that even his best efforts could not have carried him far, that the virtues and vices of this petty world matter little to the lord of the countless worlds and that, after all, what he does must have been laid down by Fate and so would have in any case happened. This ridiculous and baneful attitude towards life is not a result of Hindu religious teaching but is brought about by astrology and fatalism. The Hindu theory of Karma does not justify this attitude as it expressly enjoins on its followers the doing of virtuous actions in order to wipe off the evil deeds in previous births. The Bhagavad Gita, than which there is no higher authority in Hindu theology, exhorts man not to pass his days in inglorious inaction but to do one's duty without caring for fruit and regardless of victory or defeat, gain or loss, praise or blame, for the good of the world. A nobler gospel of service to mankind has never been taught. And yet poor Mother India which was the first to receive it has now to relearn it from others. I can conceive of no

more useless art than astrology. I consider it as the nearest approximation to pure humbug among all the arts known to man. Even if we concede for argument's sake that it can predict the future correctly, the pretentious claim that to be forewarned is to be forearmed is simply unsustainable since if all things have been so unalterably and immutably ordained as to be foretold long in advance it is obvious that none of our efforts will ever be of the slightest use since the ordained will always happen. So, the only result of such forewarning will be to elate or depress people as happy or unhappy events are foretold and to make them cease to strive either to bring about success or to avert defeat, taking refuge in an inglorious inaction and acceptance of things as they come. Many Hindu and Muhammadan monarchs have fallen victims to cunning astrologers and have lost their kingdoms without even a manly fight because some man foretold their defeat and downfall. I must add that a belief in Fate, correctly understood, does not cause this degeneracy if only with it is combined the healthy belief that the divine well of futurity which determines events cannot be sounded with human ropes, especially the ridiculously short and twisted ropes of astrologers. I do not believe in that facile optimism which pervades the West, nor do I believe in that depressing and unidealistic pessimism that prevails in modern India. I believe in the reasoned

and philosophic pessimism of the Buddha with its appeal to social service. Hence, here also it is our ancients rather than our western brothers who have to teach us, though, undoubtedly, an observance of western social workers will be a practical example of the teaching of our ancestors.

Now we come to the question as to what, if anything, India can teach the West. Westerners will pretend that there is nothing of value that we can teach them except it be negative lessons such as are afforded by our diseases like elephantiasis which give scope for medical research and our social institutions like caste which may warn them as to what will befall a great nation if it gets itself enmeshed in such a net. Indians will, no doubt, pretend that we have to teach the West almost everything beginning with astrology and ending with Varnasramadharma. Our conceit is only equalled by our appalling ignorance. The West does not need either the doubtful benefit of Varnasramadharma (vocation according to inborn abilities which are for all practical purposes judged by the caste in which a man is born) or the real curse of astrology. But there is one thing which India can teach the West in all humility in return for the several lessons received by her. And that is the ancient teaching of her sages that the whole universe is pervaded by Him Who is the One in the All and the All in the One, Who is the Creator

Sustainer and Destroyer of the Universe, that all things here below are manifestations of His, and that all our acts should be dedicated to Him in the spirit of sacrifice and dictated solely by duty, uncaring of fruit and regardless of gain or loss, victory or defeat, honour or dishonour, and calculated to bring benefit for the whole world and not merely for a petty country at the expense of others. Let us teach the world the sublime truths that the foundation of the universe is Dharma, that he who upholds Dharma will be upheld by it and he who tries to destroy it will be destroyed by it, that the same God is in all, and that the bodies are given to us for serving all created things. Let us wean our western brethren from their exaggerated belief in the might of man unaided by God and the importance of this petty little world and its concerns. Let us teach them that this world is no bigger in the universe than an ant-hill is in this world, that men are in the scheme of the universe perhaps not more important than ants are in the scheme of this world, and that therefore while we should, even as ants do, do our daily routine duty with zest we must concentrate our main attention on the hereafter and do acts of duty which are guided by Knowledge which is guided by Faith and thus gain freedom from life and death. Before we can teach this sublime lesson we must learn many lessons from the West and our own glorious past and purify ourselves.

Furthermore, we must think of the most stirring personalities in our cultural history, of Savitri who crossed the edge of the beyond in a determined attempt to get back her dead husband to life, of divine Sita, the model of chastity and patience and forgiveness, of Rama who refused to fight unoffending kings and forewent the glory of performing a Rajasuya, of Krishna who taught the most soul-stirring truths of philosophy on a battle-field, of Gautama who deserted crown, parents, wife and child for serving mankind, of Asoka who sheathed his sword after a brilliant victory and swore to war no more and dedicated all his life to the service of suffering humanity, of Emperor Sibi who was prepared to give his life for rendering justice to an eagle, of Panna who sacrificed her child on the altar of loyalty, of Meera who, by her infinite faith, saw God face to face, of Kabir who realized the One in the All and the All in the One, and of Ramakrishna who swept the closet of a scavenger. Purified by such thoughts we must, if we can, approach poor suffering Mother India, her forehead furrowed with a thousand sorrows, her body half-starved and gashed with a hundred wounds mostly inflicted by her own children, her feet sore with centuries of walking on thorns, her breasts shrivelled by constant mal-nourishment, her brain stagnant as a result of inadequate circulation of the blood, her mind giddy with weakness, her face pal

and anæmic, her lips parched with thirst, her cheeks wrinkled and bloodless, her eyes full of tears, shame and terror, her clothes dirty rags scarcely covering her nudity, her arms mere skin and bone clutching to her bosom millions of tiny girl widows, Devadasis, untouchables, baby mothers and beggars, the products of her more powerful children's injustice, her skin covered with itches, her stomach aching for food, and her heart filled with black despair. This hag is Mother India, and her present state is the direct result of her children's crimes and neglect. Do not draw back from her if you are her child and have sucked her breasts. Answer her appealing look, approach her tenderly, kiss those wan bloodless cheeks of hers, nourish her well, cease inflicting wounds on her, protect her from her enemies with the last drop of your blood, take the thorns from her feet and make her path smooth hereafter, dress her in seeming raiments, remove the black despair from her heart by taking charge of the wretches she huddles and treating them affectionately, and you shall be rewarded by a contented smile from your mother, no longer a hag now but transformed into the gracious, beautiful, fearless, world-respected lady of old by your moral reformation. It will be no joke, this moral reformation. It will require all the courage, ability, tact, perseverance, faith, charity, patience and love that you can command. You will have to overcome

the apathy of centuries, fight tyrants, defy society, be prepared for ostracism, assaults, prison and death and, what may be even more painful, the ingratitude of those for whom you have dedicated your life. Often, all your efforts will seem to have been wasted, and your life will unfold itself before you as one long record of dismal failure. Your fate will be that of your great countryman Bhishma. Like him you will have to fight, refuse to acknowledge defeat and lie on a bed of arrows, wounded by your own kinsmen and countrymen, waiting for the Uttarayanam (better times) which never seem to come. At times the battle will seem to be lost and all further fighting appear useless. But remembering the glorious lesson of the Bhagavad Gita you should go on doing your duty, unattached, caring not for fruit, and unmindful of gain or loss, victory or defeat, honour or dishonour, pleasure or pain, till the goal is reached. Till Indians do this and recover their souls, they will not be fit to teach the West the sublime lesson of their sages. Will they respond to the call? I feel in my heart of hearts they will.

1937-30 Printed at the Bangalore Press, Mysore Road, Bangalore City.